

Henrik Latrope

by
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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This is a parody on Albert Camus' *The Fall*, and it satirizes Contemporary Architecture's Dystopic Marginalizations. It takes place one fateful night between a frustrated middle-aged architect, Henrik Latrope, and his fresh off the streets client Moseley.

Latrope is the un-sung hero of dreams turned to ash. After many years in the building industry attempting to make it big, it is clear that he has had enough: of everything. He is angry at the state of his world but knows not how to change it. His only hope seems to be finding a client who understands what he is trying to achieve. To get Moseley up to task, he ends up taking him on a ramble throughout Toronto.

Leaving his usual professional mask at the door, Latrope sheds light on a stream of challenges his one-man lead practice must face. He paints a dire picture of a profession whose inherited high culture leanings, and sheltered development, have resulted in many misconceptions about its intentions, inner workings, and relevancy. Latrope swears that architecture is essential, and as a hard-headed believer in the superb righteousness of his ways, he attempts to save Moseley's soul from leading the sinful life *sans* Architecture.

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*To my Grandparents, Mom and Dad,
For reminding me of architecture when I doubted. To the future, for never doubting; fly on.*

Henrik Latrope

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Forward

This work is conceived after the form and tone of Albert Camus' 1956 modern novel, *The Fall*. Like the latter, it is a monologue fiction that reads as a satire. Here, the figure of a modern professional, and the culture of their practice, is once again a focus. Rather than the myth of justice and the judge-penitent, we have here, the myth of a modern authorial architect, and the culture within which he wishes to build.

Henrik Latrobe is a caricature inspired by issues of both theory and practice related to the profession of architecture, and his name is a play-on-words from the real-life Benjamin Henry Latrobe.

In the late-18th Century, this gentleman, engineer, and architect came to America from England. He originally intended to pursue the life of a gentleman in Pennsylvania wherein he thought he would be capable of living off of income from his lands alone. Instead, he ended up having to once again take up his professional mantel as a practicing architect and engineer.¹ Amidst a new milieu which lacked experience and confidence in his expertise and outlook, Latrobe had to face the constant frustration of pursuing legitimacy for his work. The practicing architect today can still run into similar challenges on the part of exposure, compensation and trust.

Except for architects David Chipperfield, Zaha Hadid, Frank Ghery, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Square One Shopping Centre, and company H&M, all proper names of characters and companies mentioned by name are fictitious, and any relation is purely coincidental.

¹ Woods, *From Craft to Profession*, 15-16.

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² Blank pages *within* body of text left blank, are also intentional, but shall not be labeled with such formalities.

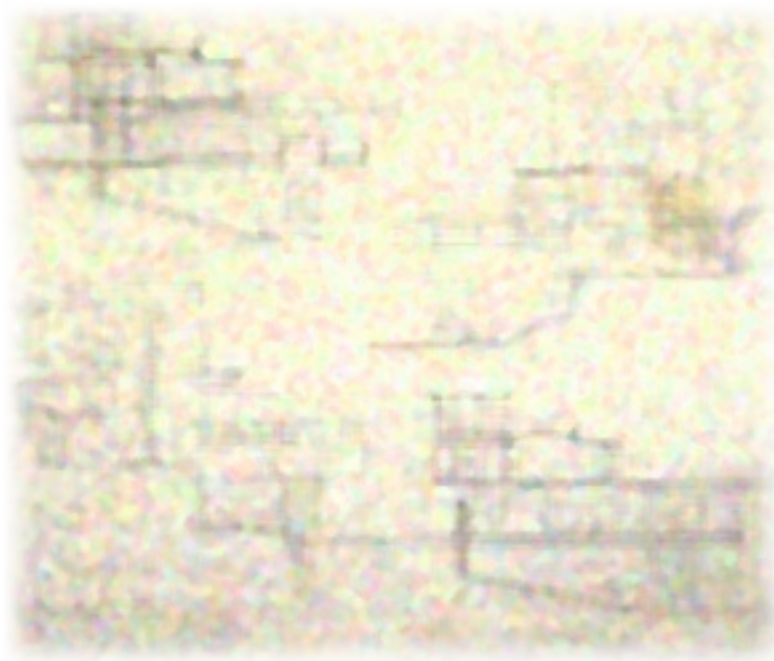


Figure 1. Falling Water image with 4 elevations

Aha, there you are Moseley, my *dear* client. I am happy to see you again! Everything is ready for your perusal, the drawings have been crisp and clean since the morning!

How was the ride over? Good? Great! Would you care for some wine? And only the best cheese? There you go; now to the real business. *May I present you*, a wonder? Ten sleepless nights in the making, but it's here! Finally! An ingenuity? The resurrection? I dare say, I'm quite fond of the way it was handled myself. Since you came to me requesting your dream house, I feel as though I have stumbled across a most perfect idea, for the juxtaposition of cover and views this high hill has to offer, and I cannot wait to discuss the many options we've lined up for you!

We've worked on it all week. I've had the staff toil, and rack their brains. We've been hard at it, through the working hours, the non-working hours,...*but good god*...they were all working hours weren't they?! Yes - some especially devoted disciples were hanging around for the weekends too!.. Myself included! No - there is no need to thank me! It is only my greatest pleasure. Can't you see? I live for this! Did I already mention it has been set aside, crisp, clean, awaiting your approval

since this morning? Oh good, yes... sorry if I'm a bit scatter-brained at the moment, it must be the sleepless.....*err* no, the excitement! The excitement at seeing you taking in the visions, the ideas, the whole shebang! But please, don't let me get too carried away by my enthusiasm. I would go on for hours; but I *always* keep it professional. Everything you need to know, will be presented to you in due order. Any questions, just ask. How much will it cost? We will get to that later! As I said, do not worry about a thing!

Now; look here; *just* for you. '*Villa Toronto*.' We focused on a series of pivoting points that capture the 3 basic conditions of the site, while paired with a stepped suite of public to private programmatic succession. As you see in this life-like render, a traditional rustic feel inspired by the greatest Villas of the Italian hilltowns, but this *particular* one is yours alone! No mere builder, or architect alive, has dreamed of such a work before, and not another will hence! As you look to the model here, the entrance will take you into a dramatic engulfing of stone mass covered by... [!!!]

What's wrong? Why the look? Is this... is this in any way lacking of what you so passionately envisioned when you came to me, going on for literally hours about your history and your dreams? So naively sauntering into my office, head full of presumptuous ideas of what you want? Of what you think you can have?!

No - don't worry about answering that; before you say anything, tell me, what's wrong with it? Where's the bulk of what you asked for? Why - sir, this is more than you asked for! What; you just wanted what you had on paper? You expected only that for my services? [*Sigh*].

Sir - did I fail to discuss the word architect after my title? And *design* services, is a no-brainer, no? Well then, let me make one thing clear now - no it would not have done if I had simply regurgitated what you gave me! There was no life in the project then, it was struggling for air! And - well you know life; it gives and it takes in order to work!

You don't need three washrooms on the same floor for a two-person house! But you always need a concept, a big idea, so let's focus our attention on that! What? You don't know what it means to live by concept? How do you live, if not by ordered principle!? This concept, of screened planes ordering views, was carefully, attentively, most conscientiously divined and crafted from the site and your dear self Sir, to make utmost sense with you! And yet; you can't make sense of it?

Your life can do without the 3rd washroom! Why focus on that? It is the concept you should worry about; that is this project's destiny - its whole purpose! Without the concept, it would be nothing! It wouldn't be Architecture!

I was catering to the high concept of your life's work, the ritual you'd perform daily, the depths of your Soul! What's a pesky washroom got

to do with that? Ok ok ok, fine - I'd never forgive myself if I displeased a client. You are the breadth of my existence. We will make some adjustments, but they will be slight. It is my most humble opinion that this concept works for you, your site, and your program; trust me I know. I've worked through it, my team has, I'm educated... and I dare say I bloody well know you better than your children! *As I was saying...* No! Of course not! Of course it won't take as long for our next meeting; why we could even have it for you within a fortnight, I promise!

Why no! No it will not be like the description you sent me! Why go back to that? 3,000 sq ft and under \$175,000, and designed in only one month? What? Do you expect me to not eat in that time? Do you Sir, know, how long it takes for me to detail a mullion? Do you know what it means, to grasp the intangible delicacies of delight that your new paradise on earth must provide you every waking moment, and relegate it back in discernible intelligence? Do you know what insufferable measurements go into providing you with just enough light, and just enough warmth that you could wake up, comfortable each morning, to the glorious sunrise; that at precisely 7:15 am, you could enjoy a hot cup of cocoa with the skyline in view, go through your little walk in the woods with your two poodles, and come home to a dinner each night, lit by a heavenly wood stove fire, and dulcet rose aromas from the open garden below, while the

sun sets in the horizon, and you only feel deep satisfaction at day's end, knowing for the first, and every time, *this* is it, and that you've made it? *This* is the life you dreamed of?

You don't! By golly you don't! But - it's a wonderful, a world-full of difference you see! No, no, you shake your head in disbelief, but it is, I say, it IS! What I do is timeless, and priceless. Well, don't take it literally... I put lots of time in it, and I should really increase my prices to reflect that... But you see here? That's the problem! This magic dare I call it; you just can't get that through a simple request! You can't pull it out of thin air. You most definitely cannot get it from your mail-order list!

'Hey inspiraaation! Take this list, give me the house I truly want now!' You think me to work like that? No you see! Inspiration only comes when the stars align! And in that meanwhile, I end up walking like a dead man in a cage; back and forth, back and forth pa pa pa pa; waiting for the miracle! What I give you; it's not a machine, it's not a single input you're getting here! No - this is tremendous and tedious work, the end of which arrives at genius the Ancients gawked at, beauty and harmony which you'd have never guessed at, I'll have you know. But you probably can't know, you who have not experienced it! Let me try and explain.

Can I ask you something, hopefully not too personal if you will? Have you, Sir, have you ever taken a serious walk out there recently? Have you even seen the city you're proposing to build in; have

you *really* looked at it; ever? Do you even know Toronto? Do you know what the city really needs? I think, you might just benefit from a little tour. No I insist! And it will not be added to your tab; it *really* won't take up much of your time, and will be entirely worth it. Besides, not like an hour or two makes a difference at the rate you pay me. Don't worry we will be back in a jiffy. And you are bound to know so much more!

Come now, step out of my office for an instant. I'll show you the world; I'll show you it like you've never seen it before. Watch your step; the architect who designed this particular office didn't know what they were doing. I curse them each time I step down this stair! It was my estranged wife; people thought we split due to creative differences. Yes each time I exit the office! I get so caught up in rage, I hardly dare show it, but it boils me to the core. I know it's bad for my health; whatever, I'll take my frustrations out through my cigar. You don't smoke do you? Never mind... 'Scuse me for a bit. It's the only way to deal with those nincompoops.

[*Smoke withdraw*]. I know, I have to repair it sooner than later; I'll get to it, I'll get to it. What the stairs? No! My smoking habit, my temper, my success rate, my life! All of it! Gosh-darnit, isn't it funny - but terribly so! - how it's all related? I suppose I could start with the stair, and see where it leads to next. But I know in advance, that I can't.

I think about how I should change it, but then if I do, it just turns into a life-task of its own, and I dare-say I can't afford that right now. I mean if I do - who will look after *your* project? See my project, it can wait, I can put it on the back burner again; if I start that stair repair job now, why I'll never finish! It's all off; all of it is wrong! Heck - who puts a skylight on the South-West, when there is a door with full-height glass right beneath? It burns my eyes! And it's boiling in there; the furnace room is supposed to be out of sight, not my front entrance! And if that weren't enough, did you notice that the handrailing is 10cm too high, the treads 5cm too short? Or how it so obviously doesn't align with my door trims?

No - you probably did not. It is one inch too uncomfortable. Metric, imperial; it's all the same. Which do you need me to speak in, so you might better understand? Ah - so prior to me, you're not in any way tied to the building industry? You only use metrics I gather? Good for you, good for you - I can't get these numbers straight anymore. What - draw in meters, build in inches? Who thought it up?

Once, we had this project down South you know; it went down south pretty quick, I'll tell you that! I never liked imperial; horrible for calculating! A day's work of conversions alone! So I tried to draw it in meters, as the software allows one to *choose* to be sane. Everything was going perfect; I could size things, draw them up quickly, and I

understood what I was seeing! It felt like everything would go according to plan! It wasn't like a blind man leading the blind, and for once I was making good progress! One thing lead to another, and guess what? I forgot to convert the whole thing back to imperial! I was gonna scale it back, it was a click's work, but the printing made a fuss as usual, three clients were pestering me about bills at once, the intern I was supposed to mentor never showed up; I was all over the place! One button, a simple multiplication, was all it took! But a slip of the mind, and bam, a disaster! Three extras - from each consultant! A mandatory trip to the city to get it fixed! Fifty re-prints! A week set-back on your project plans, and a month behind-schedule in construction!

I'll tell you how that could have been averted! If them lot stopped being such cowards and advanced with the times! Now I just want to be left alone without dealing with the numbers. And you sir? You too shall be in such a sorry state as to how dreadful this stair is; you'll peer at it in disbelief, then slowly hatred as it dawns on you that everything you have ever tried to do, was always that tiny bit off centre, that it was never quite right! That your dog died when you were eight, and that you never got to say goodbye, as your parents dragged it off to the unknown, telling you it was for the best, when in reality, in your reality, all you had ever known was shattered. And now once more, you stand sickened on that precipice,

teetering into the abyss, incapable to move back, incapable to move forward. Stuck in your abhorrence, and completely powerless, so as to abhor. Yes - this stair is the epitomy of that! As is every architecture that goes wrong!

And so we must be careful to not create such terrible, soul-crushing destruction on our fellow man. My sincerest apologies at bringing such a fate to you. Now that stair will haunt you wherever you go! You shall apprehend each visit! I suppose you now ask why I even bother getting to it next year; or any year at all, as a matter of fact. Why do I hope against all hope, at such hopelessness to change? I hope, because I still dream! I dream I will get to it! I'll get to it next year; I can't afford to right now, I'm still waiting for the money to come in from my last three jobs!



Figure 2. Portrait of Michael Lee-Chin Crystal

Are you sure you don't want a smoke before we head out? Alright. I must say though; I'm starting to quite like talking to you; you seem to get it, even though you rarely say anything back. Come on; ask me something! I have been talking too much haven't I. What is my favourite building? Why, of all time? Oh, I cannot say; well where are my manners, which is yours? Let's have a look at it then shall we? No need to be shy; I promise I have no desire to laugh at you ...[points]... Are you *sure* you should be liking that building? That building there? It sticks out like a sore thumb! It's an insult to the people of Toronto! What type of architect-client duo dreamed this rubbish up? I could have crumpled up a napkin and said: *'Here's my creation for you! It will be so marvelous, it'll be brilliant! It will have titanium steel markings all over so that its' brilliance spills onto the streets, literally burned into people's minds!'*

Seriously; how many months of design did that take? A year? Two years? What were they milking for the whole time? The least it could do is compliment the building onto which it so hideously clings. What is it about these starchitects that you are all so obsessed with anyway? Of course - if I had the name and tenure, I would not be vain. Hardly am I vain now! No - I would not pretend

like my glass cock was superior to all other glass cocks. I would sit down with the client first and say: Listen here. Let's talk about the city, and then a little bit about its' architecture. You do not know what Architecture is truly about. You think, flipping through these pages and pages of magazines, that you'll have found the One? Worse than a romantic comedy, to think such a thing.

I can show you the One; but it will take a whole deal of negotiations and tests, of head wrenching and decision making, a whole deal of trust, a long tireless uphill battle through the recesses of your deepest and darkest thoughts; yes, to reach the top of this most treacherous and rewarding of mountains, you will need to come prepared to journey! You choose to back out, afraid of what's in store. More comfortable with all that you already know, only acknowledging what you've already seen, rather than being bold enough to brave what you could hardly dream of.

So of course the image of this hideousness, like all copycats before it, only slightly poofier, is what you think you want! But avast I say; not this time! You hired me, you hired someone who will help you create! Creation! What a wonderful word it is. You can't just "get" the city by looking at an image; the city is a living, breathing thing! But it also has to be beautiful! It can't be too extravagant. It can't draw to itself so much attention, that it appears desperate. It has to be receptive to the

people's stories first! It has to make the people proud; it has to make a mark!

But not a mark like that! No - it should be noticeable because it makes sense! It makes you think! Heck, maybe even inspires you to reconsider your position in the world. To give more, to take less. To ask; *'What have I been doing all my life before seeing you?'* Not so with this beast! It makes you stand back in confusion! Angled walls? *'Why?!'* Where things need to be displayed? *'Who is the showman here? What is going on? Where is the order in the world?'*

Well - I suppose I can have some sympathy for the poor fool that thought it up. How many times can you reinvent yourself? Most people only reinvent themselves after a midlife crisis! Sheesh! How many midlife crises am I supposed to get? 20 a year? I can't even number the architects who *could*, let alone *would* have that many projects per annum, should they be deserving of the title. How would you get to be personally involved in such a complex process?!.. You'd have to... delegate! How is it still your work once delegated? Once polluted by another's thoughts, opinions... it basically becomes *their* project!

No sir, not for me. That's why I work alone. Delegation is a sin to the architect! Or perhaps he thought: *'I'll do what I know. It's pretty much the same problem; why make a new image?'* Seigneur! It's inevitable you start to see the same path staring back at you. Does anyone disagree that the

Acropolis is of the highest beauty? We have fallen ever since. A whole new life-changing image? All great architecture these days has to be life-changing doesn't it? But I don't see the Nobel Peace Prize being won by the same person, much less in a consecutive suite. What are we even fighting for? Is it worth it? *Nab!* - he probably says; *I'll just give them what they already learned to love; stick with what they want, and what they know, and what every other major city already has, so that this very city can join the club and have it too!* ...and can you believe it? These cities go for it! Must be those city planners agreeing to it, huh. Geeze they love that stuff!

His image preceded everyone, even himself. By this point, there wasn't reason behind his moves, only presumptuousness; *'They MUST have me!'* If you had said that to a design jury in your undergrad days, those undergrad days would be over that instant! They would have eaten you alive. *'Must have you,'* they'd scoff? *'We spit at you when you give us THIS!'*

There is no reason in such a world, there is no order! There is only what people want, and nobody wants me! Woe is me! When will my name be risen to fame? How is his already there? Of course you think you know all about it because the images you see are the best of the best; yet, you don't see all the struggles these images create. I'm sure the staff go through it every day; *'Who is this architect!?'* they must be thinking, as they navigate the awkwardly framed walls; *'Who is this buffoon?'*

They must curse as they try and wash those awkwardly framed windows. *'Who is this merciless traitor?'*, they probably cry, as they sit in their cubicles, lamenting what their home away from home used to be.

Oh - you think an addition, is simply more space, just tacked onto a magnificent building with more magnificence? I'll tell you - it's a whole world; and it can be a poorly crafted one at that! Nobody likes a poorly crafted world! What - \$300 million dollars for *that*? I hear you. Oh - and counting? But you never see the rags behind the riches! All you get are the glossy magazine pictures; you are under the spell of the photoshop effect!

Wake up I say! We are decrying all those anthropomorphic models for telling us how to look; what about those architecture models dished out with the same intent? An empty street with dazzling lights, and no people? Who ever heard of such a thing?! I design so that people inhabit my client's vision, and stay! I design mindfully! I'm not doing this for my own ego - but that building; it just screams ego! I have none - I'm an angel! My buildings attest to it! But this monstrosity? How could it have dreamed of ever being born? If it had a voice, it would probably say: *I am destined to come down, I was never meant to be this way; you see that building I am attached to, that past? That was the real me; now I'm a shadow of my former self; now I don't even know myself, I don't even know what I stand for; do I stand for the paparazzi? Do I stand for consumerism? I don't think I*

stand for anything, that's why I stand in every direction, that's why I look like I'm about to fall over and someday I probably will, if the ice and crap doesn't make me come down first.

Oh the aches one goes through, when one truly understands! You thought I was going to treat you as though you knew everything? Oh please! Nobody understands architecture these days, hardly could a layman such as yourself! What you thought you knew doesn't make sense at all! No, no; do not worry; your enjoyment shall not be quelled in the least from real knowledge! Nay - it may increase as, by my side, you gain respectable knowledge, and an inch or two of pride along with it; you might begin to boast to others of their own ignorance! I see it already! You shall be one of the brightest scholars of the city, that couldn't call himself an architect, but was gifted with the presence of one such as myself.

You've much to learn, so let us move along quickly! I've enough of this site, unlike those tourists over there! I still drive by it occasionally, and every day, they or some other ignoramous, sit beneath its walls, posing and taking pictures. And what for? To show another amateur perspective? To bask in the glory of another of their experiments in photo-journalism? Alongside another of their endless and insta-forgettable breakfast portraits? Pshh. That internet; - it is ruining all good taste! It's nothing like it was 20, 30, even 40 years ago. Yes in my day, we knew what we

were doing. Today it's all rubbish. Those tourists have no clue!

Look at them go! Haven't they had enough? At least I hope they're tourists; I hope they're not city dwellers, or suburban dwellers just looking to come down and take a picture *here*. How come they aren't taking a picture of that stoic brick building over there? That one that is standing upright and proper, and then sending it to the damn architect to say: '*Look here! This is how real buildings are supposed to be!*'? And I understand the anti-gravity thing, I really do; I played with it in my youthful days myself- only I don't have a ten hundred million dollar contract for my structural team now do I? I don't have access to an aerodynamical space-engineer and the latest NASA gadgets, now do I? Does that make me any less of an Architect?!!!! Those are all distractions I tell you!

Have you ever sat in a one-on-one meeting with a starchitect? Much less worked for one? I have in days long gone. Good old Trapman Cheapsticks Architects. Just a block south of here; sitting in that same neo-classical building, probably peering down at everyone as if they were so great. Do you know who they are? Of course you don't! Starchitects may be known to my people, but you don't even recognize most of them by face, let alone name. But you think you know their buildings, so might as well be the same thing no?

Sure their projects were fine, they built all over, all manner of building types; but what a piece

of work. Toiling and toiling; to what end? Told it's great, but at the end of the day the old chap with the actual name on the project just got all the gold! Why go through great lengths just to get trampled on? What type of modern day flogging is this? I got a lucky escape. I wouldn't treat my interns that way! Not that they'd want to work for me! What - a circular stair used to be the mark of an architect, and now the young'uns won't even touch it! *'Too anonymous for me!'* they'll say. Is architecture really all about name?

I'll tell you what's anonymous. Making 30 models of the same piece of foam, just to get a different curvature. And all those models to waste! Of course, because there's no logical way to foresee it, that always happens. And then there's no more money to pay the poor intern. Why not just have him work for free at the start eh? That's a system that'll work! They'll be in the minute radius of a star as yet not red-dwarfed, anonymous labour will be had for free!

And then, spending all your extra money on glue because you used too much for the last 50 models the old Duce threw out without even a minute's glance! And when the competition is won and the party is set to begin, the media never knowing who you are or where you came from, or how many sleep deprived nights you sacrificed for the client just to hear a half memorized speech by mister starchitect maestro. Sure he says *'Thanks to all my team'*... well I want my name spelled out and

enunciated thank you very much! No one bothers to read the credits! That's the part of the film where they all walk out anyway! Who is to care though? What is life without a bit of brunt.

So Moseley, I think it's safe to say you don't know starchitects at all! Why are you impressed by their work, if you've never met one? You've never even come close; you would probably have to go and interview *them* to have one even consider doing the job for *you*! I wish I had the luxury to choose my clients like that. I mean, I respect you and all, but you see? Once you get to that level, well, people like you, only able to fork over about 5 million for a construction project; you're small fry for them. You're not even worth their time, even if you're paying them! Can you believe it?

Long gone are their days of chasing work; well, it used to be more secure, now even they are bending over backwards to make ends meet. No one is safe anymore! To be an architect; who can say that and say it with pride knowing they will still be that tomorrow? I haven't had the luxury of a job chasing me since... why... I've never had that luxury! I am the one chasing jobs! I am even chasing my clients for bills gosh darnnit! And I'm tired of chasing! But I cannot give up! It will not be for naught! Chasing jobs. What have I become?! A petty business-man? I'm an Architect!

Chasing bills to chase our dreams? Although... well I guess not even the damn starchitects are immune to that. Last I heard, the

great Copperfield... - ah...some field or other - had to deal with sleazy law-suites with the poor suckers who financed him, because they didn't want to pay for the installment of his nice tiles. '*But they were the best tiles!*' he must have cried! Of course they were the best tiles - you think a design can risk anything less than that which is specified? Let that be a lesson for you; the architect knows best. And if you know any contractors, or have a mind to use one, let them know the same!

Are you religious? No? Well, even if you're not, I'll tell you a religious secret. There are actually 11 commandments; Thou shall install what the architect says! It will be a sin not to. Did you really think that after all that work, we would let it be ruined by a less-than-par product, and live to tell the tale? Do you think we are contractors? No - we are architects! We designed it, and by God we will see it built through! The vision was made for perfection, and should not be altered! You'll have all sorts of architects, mighty or low, tell you that!

But, Moseley, this doesn't mean I'll turn into one of them abrasive ones when I finally get to do design above all things! I'll always make it a point to design with the best intentions; and I'll find those intentions! By then I'll be known for them! I'll keep to my morale ground! No amount of persuasion or money will change me! None! Hardly will I put my artistic valor ahead of my pride; it is a myth that architects have an ego of steel. How else would we read *your* program, and give *you* what you want?

I'll be your favourite person after you're done dealing with me, you'll see! Don't give me that look of disbelief! You fear you'll hate me by the end of this affair? This walk, even? Who told you that? Well - just like all other news, don't believe it! Look; I know there have been some rough-ins lately with these upshots and their clients; but come on! I'm sure it's because it was a head on collision with two hot-headed people! Under me, you'll never lose! I will serve *you*, with a lookout for your best interests! In the end I'll be right, even if I have to teach you that you're wrong, and don't know what your best interests are!

Trust me when I say with confidence that my visions will make you more relaxed at home, and more productive at work as a result! They will get you not only more tourists, but also more customers. You think I would do you the same as that rubbish we just passed? You think I am contradicting myself? No Sir, these two shall not be the same at all! Mine's a completely different vision. I am a different person! How could you expect me to produce the same work? This isn't engineering; this isn't a formula! No, we don't *just* do maths; if we did, you think those starchitects would exist? Maybe we *should* stick to formulae; then at least when I make something up, *everyone* will know my name!

But - hold it, I said I wouldn't go down that path; at least I'll hold off it just yet. Once you are up there; everyone knows you and they incessantly

peer for the most miniscule of stumbles. Then they skewer you alive! Aye - its no different for an architect than it is for a celebrity. And why shouldn't we be celebrities? Celebrity architects the lot of us. It shouldn't just be the shape-shifters who get this status! It should also be me! You know how much work I put into one design? You know how much of my life I give for just one of your buildings? You know how many hours I toil over your washrooms, your un-fancy stairs; even though you hardly pay me the value of that toiling?!

How now - it should equal, even exceed in value to those blobby bits they got any 'ol computer to spit out in one form! You thought the computer was going to steal YOUR jobs?

Well - ... I'm not even done complaining about these starchitects and you already got me onto computers. Good golly, back in my day we had roomfuls of drafters; yes - roomfuls. The size of those earliest computers, we had them. It was a whole team, but they were all toiling to the same end. Now? There is no working out of the problem. No - there is; *'Give me that and make sure it works in the next hour, or I'll move to the next architect down the line and make sure he is 10x cheaper than you.'* And; - what's the secret of that architect down the line? Have they spent hours finding the secret of what that brick wants to be? Well - if they're being paid 10x less and have to produce 10x quicker, I don't think so!

Let that be another lesson for you! Sure enough, you do not want a starchitect for your next project. Once they're done with all those computers, all those blobs, they just repeat themselves! And they call it style! Do you want the Ghery style? Or the Zaha style? You don't want style - you want architecture. You don't want the same thing you can get in any other city, do you? You want your building! Well - I'll be sure to give you that, and much more.



Figure 3. Portrait of Square One Shopping Mall

Keep up, Moseley, I still have so much more to tell you! Have you ever heard about - the tale of the architect and the pattern book? Well how about the modern day version. So you've done a simple google search, and now you think you know what architecture *is*? You dare imply it a *thing*, and think this alone provides you with the capacity to see what you are seeing?

Do you flip through those magazines and think to yourself: *'Ah yes - that door frame shall look very nice beside my daffodil garden bed. And that window will provide the perfect look-out for my garden! But I don't like this roof, so I'm going to go with the French style; but I don't want it to be too outdated too soon, I want a good 20 years investment in the look before I need to update it. I already know what I want!'* - you must say; *'I just need an architect to mix this pastiche of styles to my liking.'* That's what architects do, right? Specialize in the latest styles?

[*Sigh.*] I wonder what got those ideas across; what keeps them going in fact!? How many of my peers have long since graduated into the field, bright and ready to teach you all how design can change your lives, and yet, you still settle for nought? - Am I then, the only one on this crusade of ignorance? You, trusted friend, I trust you will

help me get the word out? Listen closely. Life is a box of chocolates they say; they say it, but how many of them dare have even one, for fear of disruption.

I say - rejoice! Rejoice in the unknown! Because it's creation!! How can you dream a house you've already seen? You can't! Throw out those damn magazines! They're the past! Live in the now! The architect lives there! So does design! And that's how you too can finally get it! All those new age chants you put up with, the meditation sessions, the ego-fixing trends? They will only do you good when your whole environment reflects it; that ungraspable moment of the now. You cannot get that level of life in those pattern books, I tell you. Oh aye - they sell for \$1.50 a piece it's true; but they're petty dreams. Broken dreams; dreams of a lost age, and all mixed and matched.

How would you feel living in one of those? You think you'll feel content, because you know what's coming? No - you'll feel bored. You'll feel bored and in an instant you will throw it out, you'll curse the rotten builder who sold you the goddamn thing, and you'll find yourself in bed with the neighbour committing god-damn adultery. That's what bad architecture will do to you. You laugh; but it's true. All the world's problems are the problems of poor architecture! And no one is saying a thing because they just don't know! They just don't see goddammit! Global warming? Bad architecture. Terrorism? Bad architecture. The US president?

Bad architecture. Yes - all these problems are its cause, and all the problems stem from it!

So you ask me how to solve the situation? Ahh well see there; hold your horses, I'm working on it as quickly as I can! One client at a time, and I barely have enough of those! See how important you are to me? To the world? To solve those problems, well, it's going to take a whole lot of work, so I can't give you a general answer. It's all too interlinked, but it's also all too specific. It's a specific case by case problem. And in each case an infinite case of sub-problems if you will, Moseley!

We would have to sit down; we would have to draw it out. There will not be a set construction ready for you before you come to it! See how those simple-minded pattern-books have you thinking all wrong!? You might be saying; *'How zen-like of you, to live with such knowledge.'* This is just the way the cookie crumbles. I have no control of the process! No, no - this is not to say we will not have control over your building's end result. Hah! No, everything will be fine there, trust me, I've been trained for this. How have I been trained for this if every building is different, you ask? Why professional conduct! A bright mind! A capacity for reason! A sprinkle of Descartes, and trusted engineers to boot, all working with me, it's a dream! Except for those contractors; those gosh darn kids! Everything has an Achilles' heel. But don't worry - I can even handle that, it's what I keep trying to tell you.

Think of me like a doctor, only you have all these hidden symptoms that you do not even know about, and I come to the rescue! You don't go to a doctor expecting to have already treated yourself, aye? Neither should you come with such expectations to me! Those plans you find, and then tell me to model? They make you think things should just be replicated ad hoc if you like it. Well guess what? Life doesn't come in a set case or a model you know? It *needs* imagination, feeds off of it! It's one-of-a-kind, each highly particular! *That* is architecture!

I can't give you last year's style just because you like it! No - you must get a direct expression of your life! You think it's simple living in a relic of the past? Bahumbug! Everyone can see through your facade! And all these crises of consciousness, all these isolation cases? It's because the architecture they live in was not even made for them! You cannot just fit into someone else's life! Your life is your own!

Everybody thinks they can do what I do, just because occasionally I reveal that I can design everything else. Well - *spoils* is all I got from them, and not of the good kind! Tag the name *design*, and everyone thinks they can make masses of public proportion, material soundness, structural integrity, and heavenly delight. I'm not a blob-maker, a square-pressor! I'm an architect! Do not label me with your formalities! I shift with the wind, but only because I know when it's best to fly. That's not

something to be told, copied. Everyone wants to be in on what works. Take the wise advice of age-old experience, mistakes are what works. That doesn't mean producing endless amounts of them! No Moseley; like in all things, it means learning from them over time, and never repeating them again! Even *I* made mistakes in my early years; but that didn't close my eyes and keep me complacent; hardly! My works can be anyone's muse, but they won't be everyone's fool.

Yes - it's my experience that allows me to see what I like and copy like an artist; to commandeer as I do, and no less than an architect should! And with the strictest code assurance, I assure you, my good dear Sir! Yet - a capacity to re-think it. Doesn't that render you completely speechless? Does it not subordinate you ordinary folk who stick to rules, thinking they are exactly as they come, as they ought to be? Why - next thing you'll know, they'll be blaming the architects for the fall of religion! I'll be; we claim no such thing, we're neutral I say, we're the Switzerland of policy; we work for you and for them, but only for the best interest of all involved so we never fight; other than the right of the building to be the best that it can be; and there's never an end to fighting there. I can guarantee you that, under whatever rules you find yourself!

But rules - who needs them? If you can re-think them each day, you're golden; you make your own rules as they come! Principles that are

formless, but allow infinite forms! I do it all the time. Now - if my team mates could just well do the same I'd be golden; my project will be golden. It would be like nothing anyone's ever seen before. Yes, Moseley, I know I spat on that addition earlier for its novelty, but that's a different newness entirely, and someone else's work, a one whom I never admired and never got; no you see mine would be contextual *and* sensible.

How, you say? Why - trade secrets, trade secrets! What did I say about rules? What did I say about creation? I can't give you a general formulae for something I design! If it's not got a client, a site, a program - I can't even begin to copy and paste! And when it does? How scandalous you should shift my conceptual skills so low!

Sure - washrooms, stairs, an occasional detail, window or two, I'll admit, I am guilty you have me there. But a whole project? Why - how dare you seek to embellish my lot, under the category of a mere pronouncer of things already been done. Do I look so ignorant as that? Have you not seen my buildings? Each is different! You know why? Because it's a different lot!

What do you mean what happens if you don't like it? We continue! We don't just stop with your original; you've got to break the mould! You've got to re-invent yourself! You've got to be a free man, a new man, a responsible happy man; you've got to be handed your dreams and work with mine! I mean, I will work for you for my

dreams to be complete. Wait - sorry did I get that wrong? You will work for me to ... no; we shall work together so I may get what I want; no wait that still doesn't sound like what I'm trying to say. Oh - we'll get there eventually I know it, I know it, it's at the tip of my tongue... Ah I lost it; forget it! It's *always* a work in progress, so, let's just likewise be on our way.

The point is, I'm the guy you want to work with. Architecture - I swear by her - has made me an absolutely morale, loyal fighter for the rights of all - people, environment, law, life - all. And I'm their spokesperson, I'm like the president, only able; I see no wrong there, this system works for me when I get enough on board.

How about a spatial exercise then? Have you ever studied your own bath tub? Not yourself in the bathtub silly! Although yes - that too; precisely why it's there, how it's made and how it fits, how you fit within. Now expand to the grand stair, the vestibule, the street, the city quarter; why Moseley, you're catching on! There is no separation of things! That's exactly what I've been saying this whole time! And when we look at it, what do we see? None of those things! Well - not *just* literally, you know? We see invisible principles, that work to form!

The architect knows the way by relational formation, not forms pre-formed! So do not make believe by arbitrary likeness, feeling your way without thinking! Or thinking without feeling! You

must do both! *Abh*, Moseley, it's nice to see your eyes gleam; are you crying from overwhelm, or because you begin to understand the beauty of interconnection?! What spaces could evoke those archaic sensations but those meticulously worked out and brought forth to you by an architect?

See - you all believe this impeccable knowledge I inherently hold and give out should be free because it works! But what works? Final forms? Form only works because it was made to be working! Particularity is key, and what astounds the more, invisibility when it works most well - the key to it, that is! The key is invisible! But perhaps a bit of lecture will do you well to understand! Line drawing, the Latins, Philosophy 140, Ancient History to the Enlightenment, the orchestration of melodious installments in the 20th century, and of course, a little bit of pixie dust. No I am joking you fool! Isn't it easy to see why?? Process and mystery! You gotta go through the process yourself; you gotta be reborn again Moseley, not me, I already am!

And once you see with new eyes, I dare hope you shall never retort again, never repeat such audacity as to put D-I-Y in the same room as architecture; not unless it was a duly designed room, and the DIY are a stack of books on a custom shelf as a gift from your in-laws you chose to ignore, but not throw away. Sure vernacular-anarchism was a thing; but it was just a faze of experimentation gone wrong! If you won't go

through the serious musings of an architect, the least you could do is spare us some of your layman ineptitude and turn upon us a favourable light, a *'Yooohooo, we exist, and not just for tall buildings!'*

You immediately jump to the pattern books as if they had all the answers. You say you've got design experience, have you? Well show me the money then! Re-arranging the pots in your mother's garden? Bahumbug - a squirrel can do that! An animal can do that! A gardener can do that! This is not it I say!

We can make out your life for you, and build what's necessary for you to hold it together, to grow! All you need to do is go to the right place and ask. Why - did you know architecture runs in my blood? My parents, my grandparents, and great-grandparents before them; my aunts on both my mother's side, my second cousin twice removed - yes - all of them architects. I was born for this! I am an architect by birth, it's my destiny! I have had architecture in my blood for centuries! It pains me to see such royal bloodlines severed by the rise of mediocrity.

Everywhere I look people think they can be architects. People think they don't need us, think types are models. Do you, Moseley, think the same? I certainly hope not. There are two ways of looking at it. See? Two ways, not infinite; yet you get infinite variety. So there is the way that you are conditioned to view it (this can be your pattern books, your suburbs, your scientific application), and then, there

is the way you observe it. These are not the same! Take these photos on my iPhone for instance! What a photogenetic building! Oh sorry - I got distracted. Well, anyway, look beyond that photo; look at them all! Arranged in a grid; but how do I read the grid? I always used to read them left to right. When I awoke, I looked at them in combinations, but none pre-determined. That's what architecture gives you. Objects, or lines - whatever the vessel of your attention.

How else can you feel a line? I think the line was there because it *could* be! Not because it already was! Have you ever had that happen to you in your life? Of course you have! It happens all the time! As architect, I make you aware of it! That's probably why I'm so overlooked ain't it - noone bothers to question what fits, it's the complications and mis-fits that raise your interest.

Yes - long before the Google could sort for you, architecture showed you how to sort; if you could see it! And us architects - not only can we create, but we can sort! We can sort without little lists; we can sort so well that the list is created after the assortment! That's why I can't give you your little list of washrooms and poodle rooms; I need to first imagine it, then I gotta see it, and see if what I'm seeing is the real deal or not. And only then after - ideally it could take years if we had the time - can I build what your very Soul desires! And it'll be assorted by the highest intelligence there is, so that anything else will not do.

This is how I can make a place that challenges all your assumptions! Do you not want to be challenged?! But no, not in a bad way of course. I mean - challenged like you will be staring at Michelangelo every day! You will have pilgrims at your house if nothing else! Sure it might be architects, and sure they will be wearing all black, but I assure you it won't be cult-like or anything. Heck - just imagine! You're the owner of the next Villa Savoye! Your kids have gone off, and you're left alone - but you're not alone. You're in the textbooks of history. You're like a modern-day Duke! You've got the dilettantes from all the richest nations begging to be at your door! Poor tastes will hate it, but nobody ever asked them what they thought, so what does it matter? Your door will grace the e-zine readers, kobobo pads and glossy pages of readers world-wide. The tourism of your country will three-fold, and *you* will be personally thanked for it. No - don't thank me! I'll be in my office making sure you get the best maintenance surfaces, so my design isn't ruined after a year's worth of rain! I'll be working for you long after our days of contractual obligation are over! Heck - if it ain't perfect, it ain't mine! I take care of all my children, why should I not take care for this one?

Gosh, just thinking about the glorious attention it will receive, the praise, maybe even for myself a Pritzker Prize, who knows - oh don't worry about it, it's just like an Oscar for Architects, you've got nothing there to see, let alone

understand! The point is you'll have a house made by someone with those credentials, and let me tell you that is enough for me to look up to you. I may not know who you are, where you're from, or what you've done with your life, but if I were an architect just setting sail, I'll know that this sounds your name to the depths of the earth, to the farthest reaches of civilization, and from then on, I'll bow to your greatness, knowing that I could only dream of such a title bestowed upon me.

Yes - I did dream of that once, and I still do, so your royal highness, your grace, let us get down to business at once! I feel like a young man again! Why - I think I might begin my cycle of insomnia, I just can't get the ideas to stop flowing; no, no don't worry, this is only the best of news for you. A little more inspiration was all I needed. No, it won't mean endless circumspect meetings with you until I've got the *perfect* fit! Of course that didn't happen with me, ever! Where and when did you hear that? No - no!

I keep the client out of it during this most tantalizing part! This part, it'll have nothing to do with you, you just sit back and relax, if you can. Watch your favourite movies, get entertained, think of your family, and just wait until I call you back in to see my work, that's how it goes. But - of course it'll be exactly what you want, and no we are not back at square one again, I assure you. OH wait - we've literally just arrived at Square One! How about it, the exemplification of the box-as-model if

there ever was one. Horrendous piece of work, yes *work* it is. Speaking of entertainment; it's entertaining they thought THIS could be a city centre. What the living hell is this? This stupidity in stone! My God! I have never dreamed of such ugliness to be so proudly displayed.

Do people really enjoy this? Do they have nothing better to do than enter ugly architecture, and shop? Do they even see what they are entering?! A labyrinth of terror! My God! I have no words! A delusional conglomeration of space. Sure- it occupies a large portion of Google Earth; but that doesn't make it any more worthy of the name place. It was placed there, but its place-less-ness sickens me! Oh how it means nothing, it says nothing! It tries to be glorious - it just plain isn't! It's shopping! Is this too where you get your ideas of shopping *for* architecture? What is it with this shopping mania!

I mean I get it - everyone is in love with New York. Delirious New York. On and on and on we can go. The lights, the nightlife, the pop! But- this? Is this the best they could do? It sure does pop - pop my sanity! I don't even know where to look! Crowds everywhere. Cars everywhere! This is just a load of parking. Why - the most glorious thing here is the parking lots! They've taken the city over. A monument to car ownership lies before us! Not even with flare!

Lacking exercise? Just come to Square One and find parking somewhere; you'll walk endless

miles of boiling asphalt before you know where you're going! They should get a plaque for the centre of parking lots not the centre of a city! Who makes a shopping mall the centre of life?! Soulless megalomaniac business people - and the city planners that can't get enough of them! What - this creates GDP? Churns the economy? This is what your copying substitution gets you! A huge wasteland! Buffoons who think the centre of the Earth is H&M! - What? Your sister is the CEO of H&M?

- [*Gasp!*] -

I beg, your pardon - Sir! I was just; I was just...

- [*Hyperventilates*] -

Oh my God somebody help, I need to sit down! Where are seats in this place?! Oh gosh Moseley, I'm weak! I can't answer for myself! I'm confused, I nearly fainted! Please have mercy; everything I just said...! - I don't know what came over me, I can't speak for myself! I'm faint, deluded, tired! I was, actually just... no this has nothing to do with you, please do not take it personally, it has nothing to do with your sister either! Or her work, her glorious work, no of course she does so much for humanity.

I'm even wearing H&M pants, I can't afford anything greater! - phew, Clothes - just can't get enough of them! No, Moseley - I think, it's perhaps

best for us to leave this... this... plah!- I've been here quite enough, a bunch of boxes, though you think you see different, it's really all the same! You see, I'm not after your sister's fine, refined taste! I'm sure she has the best taste in all of the fashion world. But please, next time you see her, tell her to hire a real architect. As you have done. You will be like a model sibling, who commissions real architecture, and not poor copies. She will look up to you in no time, if you have not up to now been the poster child of your family, this project you are looking to finance, this house, it will be that which sets you there!

You will be the family favourite. Your house, will be that which keeps your lot together, for years to come, and literally so! No family dinner will compare to the satisfaction of a get-together at your abode. Why - if there's nothing to talk about, at least they'll come for the delectable shots of fine grained and smooth, cross-laminated timber and steel joinings - I know I would! You will go down in the family generation book as a legend.

I'm sorry we ended up here, though perhaps it's best you've seen the worst of the lot, in the hopes you will not settle again. I don't know how else to show you, or anyone this illusion! It just keeps building and building as if it really does generate incomes, but for who? No one seems to care! If the architecture won't stop them, then surely the numbers will! But which numbers? Which numbers are being seen? And do they mean

anything? I don't know - don't look at me! I'm no economist! I mean, I do know simple economy but I'm not a specialist in that field! I'm not a specialist in any field! I know something about everything, not everything about one thing! No - it does not diminish my value a single bit; and I can tell you that even if I'm not an economist. Again - the proof is in the pudding, and I'll tell you the pudding will be this great house I'm to build you if we can just get back to the office quicker, you'll see it for what it's worth too.

I mean we've seen what your idea of architecture is, now let's get to real Architecture. Is it any different? Why - it's a world of difference! Has what I've said fallen upon deaf ears this whole time? Architecture - capital A - is the foodstuff of generations! Architecture without the capital, is capitally worm food. Yet - it gets generated en-masse. And no wonder. The mass of the foodstuff today is diluted crap that takes a minute to consume - with commercials - and half of that to make!

What - you expect Architecture can exist in that? Not unless it's a joke! And so they made it a joke, but that backfired because people actually liked it! The facades and the ducks and all that - you think you don't know it, but in fact you do! It's everywhere now, and it's everyone now. It's the mediocrity of this sad, sad lot. It's the thing that keeps thriving when nothing truly different will! And it'll keep going down the drain because it's all

you know, and all you've grown up with, and all you ask for and - oh - it's our stop. Thank goodness, otherwise I could go on, and on, and on. What about those city planners - or - those suburban planners more like; if they knew how to make a city, they'd be Architects - capital!



Figure 4. Studio and Studio2 on Richmond construction site

That's why you need me, Moseley! You need a (wo)man-of-all-trades to get you there! The urban planners are too high, the contractors are too low! (literally); the students are too wishful, the engineers are too boxed up, the clients are too clueless; realistically, it is only the architect that can hold this all together! You lot keep drifting further and further apart!

I'm a professional decipher-er of information and consequence. Have a look at this drawing. Oh. You can't read it can you? By God. What do they teach you in those schools; to write? Who needs writing? Who needs language in symbols, when you can have the vastness of space! Heck - even *I* can't describe it in words alone! That's why I draw it, and build it! Do you think I could have dreamed up your project with words alone? Hardly. A jester, maybe. A city planner, most likely thinks they can, but I'll tell you they're wrong; and if you believed them, doubly so. They'll give you pages upon pages of by-laws. And all for what? So they can confuse themselves and make a fool of themselves in the process? I'm sick of dealing with them! The lot of them! You know what a city planner is? Never mind them - they're those who couldn't make it in the architecture world; they gave up before ever really starting. Fresh out of school

and not a high-enough pay check! I've been in the business 40 years and I'm still waiting to grow! You don't see me turning my back do you? [*Humph*].

But I haven't given up yet. I will never give up! Those city planners; they told me about their get rich schemes; they gave up on their dreams! So they take their woes and their misery out on the rest of us! Aye - trying to make our cities better. My rump! They've made it a whole lot worse! They've made my eye-sight worse, trying to peer loopholes in those despicable rules that only serve to create the same endless jargon. I'm sick of them! What powers they hold over us, while knowing nothing of our values!

They are probably just using those laws so they can say: *'Poo you! We're the ones with the power! We know what the public want! Aye - the public want what they've already got and no more.'* - Why? *'Because they're like us, city planners.'* With no imagination, they plan, and plan, and plan. And what do they plan? Have you seen any one of them create? Create a city from scratch? No Sir! It's the architect who does that! Me! All me! Mine! My vision! My... ma-m-a ma aaa urg *ccough* cough* ahem - Sorry. I do apologize profusely, was wholly unprofessional, rarely happens - where was I?

Oh no - I am ok, you do not need to leave, I beg you! The city planning department is a bit of a sensitive topic for me at the moment. I've 4 projects right now in the works, and they're making all these irrelevant problems blow up in my face.

Not enough drawings?! I already submitted the required 15 printed copies to each of your staff! They just don't get me; we don't get each other... For the life of me, I cannot tell why! I ask - what's there to get? They play the fool... or, they are the fool! Hahaha... ah I was joking. No please sir, don't take that vociferous side of me as real; it hardly ever happens. Well, never to their face. Yes - of course I abide by their rules! Yes of course I obey the law! I'm *the* architect, in a 10 km radius from here! I *must* respect the rules; I just don't see why *that* particular bunch must see to it that I do. No - of course, with or without them, I wouldn't have it any other way!

Look - city planners and I go way back a-ways. Think of it as old friends, just ones that, slightly hate each other, yea? I've known the same city planner in fact since... why, oh my! I've been teaching that baffoon how my visions should really be, amending his ways and correcting his endless faults for all of... why... twenty years! Good God - has it really been that long? Bless me! Heaven's sake - and he is still parroting the same thing? Why of course; he's a city planner! How could he not be a city planner - get paid twice, thrice, four times as much as an architect; and for what? Getting told by that very same architect how to do one's job?! By golly - while we are on the subject of pay... would you mind sir, increasing my pay by just a slight thousand a week? It would only serve to help cover my base feeding and living requirements in this

unaffordable city I helped build... Oh it is too much? Ok - no, yes of course, you *are* the client and know best, yes of course I'll settle for that, of course. We wouldn't want to get salty with you! Even though, sir, I do think my concerns are valid; how about less of that pestering bureaucracy and more of my good intentions!? I *know* what I'm talking about, I have studied it for years!

I've carefully made visualizations of what I think is best; I've even diagrammed my research, I know it through-and-through! Conceptually, and after some consulting, in detail! Is there skepticism against it not being scientific enough? What of my complaint that most built works aren't *nearly* creative enough? Those box-minded folk don't know how to value my work, they just number crunch anyway! Hardly professional...! [*sobs*]. Oh Moseley, please be a darling and pass the tissue over there? Yes - the compost one. I'm green you see. Not from sickness, nor envy, though I come across it. I'm green, to the bone and can sort without compare. Green bin, blue bin; I never mix them. The bins, the lanes, the styles; sorting is easy, but thinking it up? The planners will tell you they got it sorted; but I tell you it comes to naught!

And would you believe it, I was right. This city is a mess without me! But how would you know? Who listens to the poor architect? I could've told them what to look for in an instant! Yeah - I said it was complex before, doesn't mean it can't be understood, just gotta use your brain, figure out

how things work, not just how they look! Simply question and think a little: *'Maybe if I build for a limited capacity, I shouldn't create endless single-row housing North, East and West of here.'* That's what happens when you consult planners; they just number crunch in the boundary, and write the same reports! Surface level work, under pretense of government. When did invention do them any good, or open and honest processes?

How does one win? Even when one dreams a dream for living in the sky, painting fabulous visions - a sordid dream turns out, and what!? You'll probably blame the damn architects for it! Have you been to any of the condos in the area? Do you have friends who are rich enough to spare you some view? The city is totally different from on high; totally! But what use is it to us common folk. Is that still a city then?

And they get so small these days, what's the benefit anyway? Provide a closet for people to live in? Who is happy with a closet? I'm not! All to be close downtown? If our transit wasn't so bad, maybe we wouldn't need all these closets cramped into each other! Sure we want more bikes, sure it will make people healthier and happy; but where shall we put them? The bike lanes are crossing with the cars, the people are chained to the pavement-it's all confusion! No order anywhere! It's a wonder that there ever was, things have just piled up, and up and up. It's like they have nowhere to go, they're all coming to me to be ordered, but I just can't deal

with ordering *their* entire systems from scratch; I'm busy ordering the disorder in my own side of the street! I'm not legally entrusted any more than that, though I wish I were!

Bah! Closets! *'How many closets would you like in your closet? Two?' That's one too many for the closets we are proposing if you know what I mean; yea we need a minimum of 600 closets per building, definitely no less, and if that'll reduce the closet space in your closet then we shall let it suffer! What's a closet to you if you live in a closet? Might as well de-clutter! Yes this lifestyle is for one type of person and one type only; and they better fit in a closet. One expensive closet; not even a walk-out mind you.*

Am I proud of my profession endlessly approving closets for living? And with no imagination; because what can you do with it anymore, if it's no longer you in charge?! It's the price tag! And bad taste I tell you; that's what draws all those closets together. Yea! - even *you* could draw me closets! Aye, you have not heard? They now have formulae to tell you how many closets you will get! And the developer demands this, worse yet, knows of it? So you can't even use the authority: This isn't good design. *'No'* - they'll say - *'To heck with good design! I want to maximize closet space!'*

No good architecture does that; you maximize living space I tell you! Then, they believe this will just be remedied by a couple of nice

floating trees! Worse, they think that mindless plopping's what we're there to *serve* them for.

I ain't serving no one with that crap! I ain't there to make crap look like gold! The alchemy we do isn't illusory! It's the real deal, or it's not! In which case - don't expect me to give you anything subpar! But nobody listens to my complaints. And what does it matter to them if they've already got them gullibles to ask for it, them city planners to approve it, and them banks to finance it - and us to draw it out! We don't get real design say in that, and what a pity. Decorators what a shame - to draw some fancy ornamentation on top of the closets, so that people don't think of them as closets but as high-end luxury living. Why heck - Modernism has come full circle hasn't it? Strip it down, tell people culture no longer matters, get rid of the ornament, give them their freedom, but only in a box so that they can't see beyond what is missing, cover it up to cover the lie.

If the city planners were so serious, they should maybe think up a rule or two on out-lawing living in closets! Maybe then get a bit of order in here huh? I'm sorry, Moseley, but I still can't believe people settle for this stuff... when will the condo craze stop?!

I used to love that view! I adored seeing the lake; and in the spring, when seasons mattered, when it was misty in the early morning, and the birds just started to chirp. What happens to it now? Birds no longer sing; they cry out as they get

squished! We are waging a war on the birds, and the people; on everything! All for those greedy developers to be selling more closets.

I'll tell you what I feel when I look at developers!!! It's not the same after 40 years in the business, but at least glimpses of hope still exist here and there. Those are the places that matter, those are architecture. Where would we be without dreaming days? Without student days? If you could say that utopia exists, it would *have* to be in one of those. I had a bright student who thought he could do everything; paint, build, draw, invent, reform government, feed the poor, alleviate all suffering, and still remain an atheist to boot, but a good one at that. Not those pesky shit disturbers on the internet forums, looking for a bone to pick. Nope, not this one; what happened to him? Life happened.

What was it like in your school days? The same I'd imagine? I don't know. I never was one to hang out with you lot. You are an exception you see, I don't know what came over me. Tell me, and I'll pretend I'm interested! Did you throw wild parties, not sleep 'til dawn? Know everyone's secrets from the first day? No? How did you live?! How did you bond? How did you dream, beyond the textbook? What sort of schooling did you receive if it wasn't like that?!

We barely saw any of you normal folk. What would it have done for you to just pay a visit to our studios? To join the most ingenious ideas and

methods in the making!? Well, we were exploring without you lot, it's your loss; the most grand schemes that clients could not even hope for!

Yes - I sat in on one of those fateful lessons you take in. It is no wonder us and the common people do not get along. We are like Gods by comparison! Not only do you not have Gods, you've ceased to believe in the whole thing! We can make mountains stand on ants; but you would not believe in it! You trust the structural engineer more than me? I did always wonder, what is so hard to learn about making calculations. Add a bit of this, take away a bit of that, and you've got an equilibrant beam. How then, can it be so hard to calculate to my desired depth, and shape?! Why *shant* you make me a triangular beam if my design's whole life depends on it!? Do you not have a computer that *can* do the trick, or at least someone with more interest in my ideas?!

They cannot listen those engineers, those tricksters! They say I'm a pain! Well - their lack of imagination, their impossible demands to stay in a box! What is a box, when you need to think outside it? And when you need twisted membranes and turns, or a whole bunch of eye-candy this way and that? A box will not do, Moseley! People will think I'm a mere decorator if I only build boxes. '*Oh!*' they'll exclaim, in let down might I add, '*Why oh look, Latrope has built another one of those fine and dandy boxes. What is the worth in paying him for another box? I can make a box. Why - I can make a box that I like! And*

whatsmore, one that suits me, one I can afford! Nay - you can make a closet, but not a box. I can make the best of the boxes, and with details to boot! If I were to make a box, it would be a box whose coherence becomes it, and moves in line with its insides, and its outsides, and makes you dream of more such effects from boxes! Heck, maybe even relates what you'd call non-boxes to the boxes.

But - I cannot make just a simple box. It will not do! I have structure, and space liaisons, and a whole manner of charm that the building must carry out. Even if it were a box, it would not be a simple box, how dare they disown my professional musings to such a simplicity as a *mere* box; and what, a cardboard one? Why - hardly my models speak of such ridicule. My models will be like sculptures in their eyes, if they should just care to look at one before daring to say such a thing. And would they even understand the value in that craft? The abstraction, the ingenuity it takes on? The spatial qualities that it captures, in a simple sweep of materiality and composition? Architectural, *most important*, and right before their eyes!?

I'm sorry to relay you what the heathens think, but as we got to the topic, we might as well carry on. Might as well learn all the ghastly things I've to deal with in advancing just one vision of mine! So would you like to hear more about the boxes, or the models? Why - I'll start with the box-makers, and in no time you'll see, we shall arrive at the models. My first encounter with the box-maker,

or *engineer* as they like to call themselves was supposed to be pleasant. I was told by everyone I can ever remember; these people will work hard to get you what you want. I was told they had been trained for it; they'd been trained to ensure my structures will work, or that my building will have electricity, that the water will run where it needs to go, that the water will be taken in as it needs to be done. I was told I would be served!

I thought; well gee, this will be easy then! It doesn't get any better than this! I can most definitely get what I want! In fact, why not be bold; I sought out more! I sought bigger structures, lighter structures, impossible views, poor old naive soul that I was. *This?* They would say. And a look, of disbelief, incredulity, and frankly, absolutely no aspiration to go any further. From that day, I had rued any instruction I had to give them. Preposterous! Even if I need to demand a box, I get exorbitant fees, and hardly any creative input on how to make it better. No dialogue, no discussion, just an input and an output.

Why - if I had access to that table-work, I'd easily have done it myself! I can count! In fact, the last 3 buildings I did, the same beam sizes were used for them all anyway! All that is added are fees and time onto my already over-worked schedule; time I could use to design! When I finally worked out a perfect solution for my client, it was thanks to my input alone; only *I* knew what I needed, which was most important for the vision. An interior pool

and bar whose Soul could never speak of more aptitude in wood and glass. The light on the smooth carvings was as delicious to the eye as a hot buttered croissant in the morning. The effect of the refraction on the beams, the attention drawn to the timber-detailing; it was to die for, carried out by carefully spaced oscillations of expanse framing and a panorama of triple glazing all around, opening out to the forest beyond. Of course I only came to that rendition after exasperating the engineer with at least 10 exchanges back and forth, so I decided they could do without another consultation meeting; what more could they tell me that I didn't know?

Space was the most important consideration whether they liked it or not, and to this day, I'm happy to say we kept with my course of things. It had nothing to do with firing the guy! My idea succeeded at all costs; we found another who'd do the job quick enough! So I changed the location of the beam he slapped in, which so decidedly broke up the rhythm my massing set up from the start.

You'd sense, as I had, something was off-balance. You'd have a scowl on your face the whole time! You'd curse my name! You'd throw your sandwiches on the floor each time you stepped in the goddamn place! You know how many sandwiches I saved that day? Hundreds! All from one beam - a lousy 241x343mm. Nothing special. My vision was special! There was no way that *thing* could stay there! Never you mind that I created the

very problem I had to solve - at least I sought to solve it! His expertise dared not look beyond his own nose! How is that for professionalism?

And what did I get in return for this ingenuity? An extra fee of \$1000 for this cow to erase it, and then another \$1000 for him to move it over 3 feet and add an inch of depth. And back and forth, and back and forth it had to go that whole time - me dictating what I want, and never getting it soon enough! After that nightmare - did you know what I got to do? The beautiful task of trying to explain to the client how the budget went up by a lousy \$5000, when, on the surface nothing really changed!

How is that for a heroic piece of work? And who cries for poor Latrope?! Who pities the poor soul and dares just pay a little bit extra so I can peacefully work with these patticakes? Life was so much easier before I had to deal with that fellow. In fact, I'm thinking of ransacking him from the job too. No more! He does not get me! Nobody gets me! Yet all I ask is so straightforward! I don't even ask; I order! It's practically delivered to them; I do the rough work that no one accounts for; I show them the plans, I show them the vision. What else is there to get? How hard is it to convince them that this is beautiful what I propose, and that garbage is not? How come beauty, that priceless muse escapes them so?

Osmosis *must* be a real pedagogy! These people go through school for their knowledge too,

schools without an ounce of beauty to their name! Not even their classrooms are beautiful, how could they be inspired to even dare dream of one day contributing to beauty itself? They have no heart; they see the computer, the numbers, the cost; they don't see the soul that it is all a part of! Them and their cruel, merciless calculations! I have had it up to my ears with vagabonds that work for the money and care nothing for the vision! How am I supposed to make them understand, when their values are upside down! They look at economics and call me a mere decorator. They think of structure and look to beam tables!

Yes - I sat in on one of those classes. Not an eye looked beyond the experiment at hand. They were taught to follow numbers and box themselves in that box; so of course when they graduate all they want to do is make more boxes! Why - give them a course in artistic freedom, and they'll drop it in an instant; *Where are my instructions? Where is the box?* To hell and back with the box I say! Architecture does not come with instructions!

What? Oh don't be looking at me so stupid Moseley! Of course they should be looking at my instructions! That's what I pay them to do and they still get it wrong! It is absurd! What language am I speaking? Vernacular architecture? How can it be? I put the line here, the arrow there, the text right beside it! I build up a grand scheme, I detail it right to the bone. I call that consultant, and this consultant, and why, I have more consultants than

fingers on my hand, and I'm holding it all together, yet neither one of them follows me!

I even made models! Thousands of models, to get to an understanding of my own proposals. You've seen my models haven't you? What would you say to that? I'd say - how much more straightforward can I get? I want the beam clear, the ceiling there, and the marble on the floor. I even made 3D renders! I didn't even outsource the work this time! All in a couple of hours' work. And they look up from my drawings without a care in the world for what's to come, they just look to make some lousy screw up so they can make more money from it later.

Yes I'm talking about the contractors now! But what's the difference? After all those years of building, you'd think something would have changed?! Sure, we graduate from different schools, we come from different worlds entirely, but are we not after the same thing? Holistic, artistic grandeur of vision? Can we not work to the same goal, and with the same whole integrity? Year after year I dream of such a collaboration; just once that I should get an equally capable partner in crime so that a project may pass without all the head holding!

I came so close last year in fact! Alas - just as I was about to sigh a breath of relief, the bugger insisted I change my beams, then took out the heart of the project, looked at the facade as if it did not matter, and tried to argue me out of my own job.

That was the last time I worked with a contractor with a mind of their own! I'm the one in charge! But - a joke I'll tell you. Hopeless; the high art of architecture cannot descend to those depths. They must rise to it! I shall keep repeating this until it happens! Why should I change? And for the worse?! What else can I do but keep waiting?

I wait on the world; I wait upon it, both figuratively and literally. Yet, here you see me running out and about, just as I do on the job. Do I have to sell myself for it? What respectable soul sells himself? Reputation is built up, not bought! I'm thinker, I'm doer, I'm maker... lately I've been yellor too! And I've even been software developer! A short stint, but at least I tried contributing to the digital world! I bugged it up quick - it couldn't handle my world so I gave up on it - what's there to get anyway? Reduction of sense-able information, and experience! IT - that's "insolent technology" for ya! And to think people believe computers too, need architects? I had enough of searching for architecture positions, and getting a load of IT positions back! Is the game rigged? The computer on their side? I don't care how many more hits IT gets from the search "architecture intern"; we were there first!

Yes - the true architect, will always be me, building in stone, in materials, in glass... not in bits! I build in tonnes! The glory of world building is mine! Ours I mean, ours; I shall not discount your

position and help dear Moseley - I can never be my own client, unfortunate as it is.

Why - much as it is easier for the IT developers with a few clicks to start their own business, doesn't make them any more relevant than I to building the world of today - not in my opinion, and in my opinion, that's all that counts!

Say - wouldn't you agree that it all depends on whose story gets told loudest? Well, to my own ear, I yell loudest! If man is the story telling animal, then whose story shall he tell? The computer's? At least I'm not a slave to that; don't tell me otherwise I shall not listen! I listen to my own song, and follow it faithfully even if no one else understands it.

What is your song Moseley? Are you to be a character model for Camus - endless fornicating and reading online papers? I care not for that! Neither should you! What do we learn from life? How to copy? Or how to think?! I can bring my thoughts to life more than any screen did for you. Does the lifestyle you connect with on your 3x5 screen really belong to you? Only if you too wish to vanish in an instant! When all goes well in my ancillary professions, at least my images get built! That's what I was taught to do; does it not *matter*?

If nothing else, remember this; that every thing good takes time; everything great, that and doubly so. That's why it takes so long for me to be where I am today! So long, my post-secondary education is probably totaled twice as that of your

kids' elementary schooling combined! As a matter of fact, I've finished schooling yet I'm still learning. Yes - that's what I call dedication! And frankly, I don't think people know or see this enough if they should complain of their dealings with me!

Why should it be that my diploma, my OAA certificate, which hangs up so proudly on my walls be obscured in dust, *and* by your ignorance of what I do? What does that piece of paper mean to you who know nothing of how I got it, nor how I faithfully practice by it!? What good did the OAA do for me? Did it bridge my knowledge with the masses? More like create a wall dammit; knee deep, and sky high - with a payed for contribution by yours truly to boot! Do they get me any more clients for all that? Hardly! It makes me angry to mention it. Why is it that your doctors should have more respect than I do when we have had the same serious training to back us up? I should never know!

You don't seem to know why either! Do you think just anyone can waltz up and say they are an architect? Bahumbug! An architect can do any job, of course they can! We supervise pretty well all of them! We see it before it's built! Take that as talent! '*Wow!*' - that's probably all you can say! What's it to you? You'll have my professional input, you'll have all my aces covered; and still you question and doubt me? Even after *all* that, you think there is a reason I'm not as competent as the other professionals you dare not do without?

Sir! - those things are not rocket science! But architecture - *'What a nightmare!'* you'd say - even rocket science would be straightforward for you then! Do you know how many hours an architect needs to be trained for you to be able to use him or her? 27 000! Give or take. Probably give. Count how much of your life that is! And for a doctor? I reckon 24 000! They likely don't train on weekends! Doesn't this render us equally trustworthy? Equally competent? And - how much a lawyer? I do not care for lawyers, I can make up laws too. I can defend criminals if I wanted it - but what of designing you a home? A place with soul? A noble, honest undertaking. An architect in charge, they wouldn't be "architect-ing" - a ghastly, presumptuous word!

No! They'd be there on the ground, with the building, ethically ensuring all is well. That dedication, and more! It takes heart, the blood of a sacrificed animal, the blessing of the saintliest that walk upon the earth; and *still*, you are not satisfied. I mean come on! Do you know who you are dealing with? This isn't just someone picked up from the streets! This is a carefully groomed spokesman for those very streets! How can you so callously deject my work just because it makes you *think* enough, that you dare arrive at an opinion!? Why - the architect is the only honest man you will trust on your project Moseley, so you better start believing me now!

But the others? How will we, how *shall* we trust them? Cruel, cruel, and all after their own gain. But what have I to gain? It seems like it is only *I* who have a real stake in the Soul of this project; only *I* care for it beyond my livelihood, why, almost a passion if I daresay so. Well - this change, this fickleness; you know how you know an architect wouldn't have it? You look at a building. A building I say! Not a program! Not a computer! Not a tool! Not the economy! A solid, good old building. No - none of those moving parts and things! It is beyond the building! It is out there in the vast reaches of space! No - not that space, not the ethers, *this* space! *This* magic all around you! [*kneels and stares up in bewilderment*]; yes, this space!

Architecture speaks to *that* indescribable miracle, and as such can be nothing but the greatest of arts, not some uncultured misbabble for the faint of heart! And my practicing it makes me the greatest of artists! If I could just perfect it, alone, without your sorry mistakes burdening me, why I should not only be the greatest artist alive, but the greatest and the most happy! My life should be made! And I would constantly make my life too! I have no intent to stop now! I am nearly there! I just need the right client, so that our dream is shared! Why - I am the right client! I know exactly what needs to be done when it comes to a design.

Why then, am I never financier? Because there is never enough money! And no one cares about *their* name! No offense to you Moseley, you

rarely come second, you're truly perfect, but alas, you're just not me! I interned a bit - long enough. Sure the clients were all filthy rich, but ... does it really matter? Do finances really rule all? What about my sophistication in phenomenological transformation and material expertise?!

I touch buildings all the time! Architecture-phelia, left, right and centre; why if it weren't so overlooked, it'd be the most normal thing on earth! Go on then! How else can you assess what you're dealing with? Real stuff, that is what money ought to be if it meant anything! Something I can trust. I've more loyalty to a building than my own family! I put my faith in that which stands still - that's why you can trust an architect. Whatever we intend, we create! When it works out that is ... and hopefully it does! Either way; these aren't just concepts in my head! Concepts help me understand, but are nonetheless rooted in the real! That's right Moseley! We work with real things, not like those petty robbers in high horses, who we bow down to, break our backs to build and get at anything. I can't stand walking into a bank! Not even the one I helped build on that corner over there. A cookie-cutter, misconstrued commission of the recession - I was desperate...! Not even the interns would touch it!

Aye - I have had my fair share of interns at the office, and all of them turned away by their dreams not being in line with reality. My older and desperate colleagues certainly didn't help them in any way when they would suffer and suffer on

about the pay and toil. Why - yes I may have admitted scruples to you, but to them I kept a bold face, I said: 'Architecture is the best job in the world, you will be your own man or woman.' And I tried to show it; but they refused to see.

I suppose working under me rather than beside me might have something to do with it; but they were too young to be in that position of seniority! That's a job for me afterall! It's for me to be the leading officer in command, the one to design! I hardly get any time to have fun, why should I let those fresh out of school types get the best of the work, when it's so few of the times available? And we now know why, aye?

They have had enough while in school, it's my time to shine! I mean; I helped them see what I was doing, they had the whole office to their disposal to check around, wouldn't you agree that that is enough? It was mighty fine and democratic of me, but I got nothing out of it. Nothing would do. Why be handed the responsibilities, when you can absorb it from the best of the best anyway?

Well - I'm sure I wasn't the cause of their leaving, but can you believe it that they had had enough after just a month? Mind you their friends were somehow not architecture students, and they had just finished first year. I guess something and I don't know what, caused them to open their eyes beyond what I was trying to show them, and they simply stopped coming.

I recently got a letter from just such a one, signed, your royal highness, high fashion designer at Atelier Million, and enjoying much success. Ok - that's great for you too Dame, please send my greatest happiness toward your high praise.

By gosh, and not even a thank you for all the toils she had to endure here? I'm sure all of it helped her on her way in whatever field she chose after this most treacherous training in stamina and patience! Yes - once you can do architecture, I wager you can do anything. I'm not hypocritical at all; unlike theory, just because you go forward, doesn't mean you can go back in real life! Seriously; what is the difficulty in putting a few scraps together to make a dress? Or to paint a picture? Or to calculate endlessly? It's just numbers! It's just isolated arts! I bring everything together *and* make it beautiful, make it relevant, at least try to be relevant; I think I'm relevant; or is it relative? Space is something else *entirely*! Forces one to see oneself seeing.

The interns sure saw something when they bolted to higher ground and less murky waters. And as soon as they could too! They hated the payscale, they hated the overtime, they hated the workload, they hated the time-frame; so what? Are you telling me it's unreasonable to spend seven years in school? And two years of internship? And at the end of that, not even a guarantee of a well-paying job? What does it matter, then? I got a job! And don't tell me it was different in my day - today

is still my day! That's why even if *I'm* struggling; I'm working my butt off trying to show you all the work that a great architect can do! I'm fishing in the work! Without me, this profession would be obsolete. Do you see the rate at which those young folk leave? They've no patience for anything anymore! If it isn't there in an instant it's gone! Off to the next instant. And - well - how do you expect a building to be built in an instant? Not unless it's mindless work will you have that I tell you!

I don't know who to blame first or more; why I might as well blame all of them; the crappy architects, the city planners, and don't forget the scum that want the goods but refuse to pay for it. Or worse - get you to get them the main goods, the ideas, for free! Yeah all those competitions? What a waste; they just grab onto all the submissions they can, and then they get a cheaper servant - or should I call them a beggar - to carry it through more cheap and disordered. A sham! Where is the morale in that? I refuse to enter competitions!

But I refuse to leave! You want to know why it's so special? I love doing my job, I love it, the responsibility, the feeling of creating something, the knowledge you'll get it built one day even if you feel like strangling everyone you're working with because they just don't have the capacity to understand anything you throw at them, and I mean literally throw, toss, aim, hurl, yes... I mean, no, no. That's not every day, don't worry! And no - it would never be directed at you, so there is

nothing to worry about. I mean, I yell occasionally, but I don't think I ever - that I recall - so much as raised *a hand* on a client! Not so much as a pip-squeak! I'm professional - by my work and by my word!

Although there was that one time -

... Oh no please - don't make me speak of it out loud! Can it perhaps wait until... I have your next set of drawings underway? I really don't want to suddenly seem like the bad guy. Oh alright - this one time; but I promise I never reveal dealings with clients to other clients,... but... this *is* a former client so maybe I can make an exception.

To be quick and painless, I mean what else can I say? There's no excuse; this guy was simply an idiot. What are you so surprised at? I can curse, can I not? I'm sorry to say it; I really gave them the benefit of the doubt. I hate talking about anyone like this, but this is an exception I have to make; once you get me started, I cannot resist. I mean - I had every bit of right to sue him for taking up my time! My precious time. So many times in fact saying the same thing, over, and over, and over again. I tried to obscure it, I really did, thinking in fact, maybe this fellow only understands obscure words. I tried to translate into french. And then, ancient Greek, and Latin, which I actually studied in school. And the classic texts. And then I tried miming. I went to great lengths, but they came with a made up mind - a mindless mind!

So I... Ok I did none of those things but one. Drawing up my professional expertise, I took a deep breath to calm myself, then, I drew a line.



Figure 5. Vana Venturi House, Philadelphia, PA, 1959-64 - Rear
01

A line that was supposed to explain everything! It did none of it. What is a line? Oh a line is a great many a thing. You've given so much deal to a name. A name? What's in a name? What does it matter when the rose smells much more sweet. Whatever I call it, a thousand names and it comes no nearer the thing. But - Architecture? Well; now there's a riddle for ya! And where to start? The sidewalk, the shadow, the stone? The arch, the tension, the void, the sky? What about the simplest building block of all, the foundation most supreme, the line?

The line, yes, not the point; but where is the point, it can't exist without the line. Line of sight, line of property, perspective and delineation. You must draw lines all the time then now don't you? Why, it would do you good Sir to acknowledge them more frequently. If that client had sought affinity with the line to the whole, maybe they'd see what I see! Maybe I'd not have fired him!

Oh do you think I did that for fear that they already had enough of me? That I should be seen as obsolete? Not me! I'm the brains behind the project! I'm of it all; this alone should make you appreciate my craft all the more! For - where shall we draw the line then, and when? It's quite an important question! Have you spent any real time

with that? Understand the line, and you'll get the rose, that's the beauty of it. One swift stroke, and order abounds - if you know what you're doing. If you've dealt with the treacherous line enough. And even if you have, it can sometimes screw you over! It's a dance to the death!

But don't worry - in your case, I will make the most courageous dance steps! There shall be only victory here! I cannot go wrong with my lines. Composition? I can break the rules and still win! I knew what I was doing; they just didn't see how magnificent and complete that particular line was! Their world has been too removed to see! Bring it back, I say, bring it back!

A swift stroke, and order abounds aye - but I know; one squiggly imprecision and all hell breaks loose! Sometimes it's as if they ask for that stuff - for trouble. Trouble is more than they're worth! And you wonder why I charge so much for lines!? Well not nearly enough! These aren't just lines I speak with! They're existence, a dance through the ages, while your language becomes obscure, changes willy nilly, gives itself over to weak succumbing, sells itself loose from what it stood for, teeters away, mine makes a mark upon the world!

One line off and your whole reputation can fall out of order! Cries of heresy! Blindness! Not knowing what you're doing isn't an option! Think about it! I want to see beauty, but to see it I must draw what I see. And - only by the line. I swear by

the line, with it and through it! The line carries me to that which was destined in becoming.

If you had to represent modern business with only the most progressive, special ideals, which line would you choose from? The possibilities abound, and each line different, and each plane thereafter, each frame, each appearance, each entity! Why - limitless; that's the power I deal with! You can't even count it up, yet I deal with its majesty for you everyday! Think this is reproducible?! Hardly! Only the cheapest likeness, and thereafter it's an entirely unique, special life, not like anything come before it! It sometimes doesn't even make sense just to be *plopped* in a new context like that. What? Design without story and reason? I know of no such thing worthy *that* name, *that* action! There is no copy and paste here! It's not just a copied line I tell you! Not unless you want some cheap-shot. One dash - and a Soul is born! And I have the training to see it!

I have the gift too, the training is not actually enough! That is just icing on an already fruitful cake! This, then, I offer you, in addition to everything you didn't know you'd need! This is what the line reveals to me, in revelations of the most secret order, but, at least, of order indeed! See, Moseley? See? See how absolutely well and proper I take care of you? And yet - you decide those fools who just copy and copy some more are worthier of your time, if not your trust. Is risk all that you're seeing? How about seeing like I see; it's

all in line, all in order! The crisp, clean wedges of glass, rising like a stallion mane in the wind - rigid rationality, and yet an impeccable flow; a smoothness, a welcoming sensation, the feeling of home.

What wizard in the world can bring together such righteousness from such a paradox? You're looking at just such a one! Romantic reason, woven through lines of steel keep your eyes locked in a steadfast gaze with this beauty you'd never have imagined encountering; it'll be more shocking than when you first met the love of your life. And God knows it'll last longer than that! You will be obsessed! How can a facade be so straight, so neat, so tidy and perfect, straighter than a razor blade, and extend the whole block, rising to most positive attention?! Sharp, clear cut, and all to the point! To the point, because it started as a most perfect line!

What an exhilarating experience a line is. Character, is the line! Steadfast is the line! Bold and great is the line! Everything you've ever dreamed of is the line! Architecture is the line! And I, Sir know how to get you there, how to draw you those lines; those all-important lines! So yes - they're important, I'm important in case it has struck you to need to be any different, any less, you shall now recognize your own folly I must hope.

How about those pattern books now, those google images? Have they ever explained to you the nature of a line to such depth? Hardly, for you cannot see the line that conjures the dream, even if

it were staring right back at you in the face! Yeah, I've driven around the country, I've seen the disproportion in taste; hardly a character worth perceiving in a city-wide radius. Distressing to say the least! *I must show you then, I must reveal it! Or - if we're talking of more plans copied from books, I must scratch it all up and fix it over before the terror be unleashed upon the unassuming population!*

And to even go back to the question, "What's in a name?" - well, next time you dare even think of it, please, please sit with yourself a little, and ask: '*Have I been paying attention to the lines?*' And in this, I should hope, as you sit, in a plaza, whose lines are of most perfect proportion, whose skyscrapers neatly and tirelessly, ever faithfully bring your eyes to the sky, and the sky itself to you, that you should answer in a loud, confident and resolute: 'Yes!' A '*What wonderful lines surround me. What precious lines of sight, and life. So in-line with myself.*' So much so, you should never lose sight of it; a yes to the architect who brought you such wisdom! Yes to me! Ode to joy? Nay - ode to the line! - I live and breathe by it! And yes - so do you! Lines, everywhere! Decisions, and lines, a city all of it! Lines, making up stories, making up dreams, each, impeccably, sensuously, morally placed!

[Actually - it happened on a Tuesday, March 15th, 1998 at 12:02pm right after lunch. The intern accidentally knocked over a pile of pennies of change, which office staff,

after months of exertion, had slowly moulded into a sea of makeshift city-centre towers. The pile landed precisely 90 degrees North on the scrawled site sketch rotated 34.5 degrees South, creating a clear demarcation that the Universe had spoken. This was to be where the line was to represent the whims of the latest project. It was touched up to look beautiful; fantastic work was praised to everyone. The associate of course knew nothing of this design process, attributing it to a convincing and lengthy prose on absurd urbanism achieving a crashing interception with modern Bourgeois values. As for the client, they were busy looking at their watch throughout the rehearsed speech, only to perk up as the talks for budget began.]

And now Sir, when I say, a line, worth a thousand words, and names all - now, what about; the image? Well then, yet architecture wouldn't have enough words for the volumes and volumes *it* speaks. And frankly - we don't have time to get into those great lengths at this point, so let me aptly leave that story with this; architecture - well, architecture is just like life, it's inexplicable, that's just what it is. It's genius!



Figure 6. Drawing of a Nautilus Shell

And how do I *contain* this?! What do you mean Moseley, how is it possible unless by being vigilant, yet at home with my observations?!

Wouldn't you agree that, as a matter of fact, perpetually speaking, it is a universally acknowledged truth it is - that everything changes? Nothing stays the same! And last I checked; it already just so happened that the times had moved on ahead. And as I sat there and bewilderedly wondered at what, if anything had happened, at what, if anything I should detect; what did I detect, but a perpetual change? A ghastly recurrence. A tomb and sure death-knell to all certainty as I'd known it. What then happened dear Moseley? Everything - everything at once! Yes - it overwhelmed me, and I bellowed and I cried!... Oh what; that? That was just me over dramatizing the design-process.

I mean - it doesn't have to be that way don't get me wrong. It is not always so glorious; but gosh - when it is? I live for that stuff! What a rush! You don't know whether you'll be dead or alive one minute to the next. Hahaha yes - the next is already past and as is this one! You've got it! How am I not in a state of despair at such a transition? And its'

endless run, a complete reminder of there being no firm foothold to grasp?

Why - I know not, and I fear I never shall. A fear of the unknown?! Hah! My sole fear is a known entity! That most terrible of fates; rejection! If I make my decisions rational enough, speak obtusely enough - you'd think there will be no rejection?! From such a removed view, only *I* can tell my clients what they need, not what they want! Wanting is easy; seeing that you're wanting is too much the pain. They'll be wanting in taste, in culture, in truth, and ignoring the very architect who would instruct them otherwise!

Who do I speak of? Why; *they*! The insufferable they! They who are against all that is good! Nay - all that is great! The planners for a start! They're the first to not listen; and the rest follow! No one believes you when you try to tell them; to show them the truth... to put a mirror to their face and say '*Look at what you are*'! They reject you. Most laudedly. I have tried it for myself. I've tried it countless times. You won't reject me will you? I cannot bear to think your answer; spare me, please!

You, I hope, will be different. A little more cultured, a little more receptive I suppose. A little more ready to accept me and all I stand for - I promise I shant stand on your toes. Only dance around them. Prance with all the trades - and for you all the while. You'll be having a good time - it is me that will be in for a piece of work. So why fear

anything at all? I should be the one afraid, yet look at me; I'm laughing aren't I? If only more of them could see me as you do now! For; they're all wound the same in the end. All the same and so of course they should see me as the eternal decorator. A damnable thought!

But wait - ...! What's this? No ...! That can't be... Look in fact, up ahead! Admirers of my building? There is already a crowd; and I'm quite sure they've been there long before we. Hurry up Moseley, hurry up! Gosh - I might have been wrong about this lot; there may be quite some hope for them after all! They might as yet come to their senses; yes, dare I say, use them for real!

Use sight, and sound, use the body for more than just clamoring around at screens, at passing moments, at little head set pieces, or those tablets, or whatever the newest smallest fad out there is. What is its point if it keeps trying to cease its own existence!? Gets smaller and smaller and more forgettable each day! At least architecture is about the statement!

And now I think, oh I don't even dream, I see, this crowd before me. So large, it gives me hope! I too had almost ceased to exist in this world of anonymity and gray overcast days, of subway rides and castaway dreams, of poor lots and horrendously borrowed aesthetics; but no - they love it Moseley! They most definitely love it!

How close to truth without my single word; except for my bricklaying of course. I think my

building is finally being given the true recognition it deserves! No longer shall I scour for votes by the architecture magazines - no, the word of mouth, the precious masses you see before me shall render it immortal alone! Through time immemorial, and it shall remain part of this great city until the city itself ceases to exist! Why - I think that there is light at the end of this tunnel!

Ahhhhhh! What is *this*?

[A crowd had indeed formed around the facade of the building Latrope had designed; but it was only to indulge in a digital art show sponsored by the local giant retail outlet opening up next door. Meanwhile, a group of teenagers were having a laugh excitedly pointing at what looked like an architectural detail. Pushing his way through the crowd, expecting to meet future patrons and admirers, Latrope gasps at the absurdity of it all. People excitedly shouting in all directions, pointing at projections, and laughing hysterically at inside jokes. The teenagers, meanwhile left to their own devices, set about vandalizing the property frontage and gawking at the slow formation of their first graffiti masterpiece; a scrawly, dripping “Maudit Bastard”].

The profanity! This isn't just a graze of the facade! Were they even looking at what they grazed? This is supposed to be a cultural icon! This is history! This is my work! This isn't just a piece of plaster; this is a threshold, a gateway, an archpiece, a metaphor, a transport; it's meant to be gazed at, not

touched! At least not in that way! Am I to draw comfort at such attention? How dare they do it!?

Maybe I can't even blame them, right Moseley? They cannot see! What is the use in blaming the blind man?! All the stuff - and it is stuff - they get exposed to is... junk, the lot of it. Objects, everything. Throw-aways, and garbage. I've a right to critique - not like I indulge in *that* world. And just so, they're throwing a piece of mine, a piece of this city away! So unawares! Why - I forget who said it, sculpture is what you back into when you look at art. Well, what of architecture? Is it really stooped to become a dog walker's rest? Is it to really be a court for the measly? I never dreamed of such a thing - neither should you!

Where were the clients in all this? Do they even take care of this building? Have they visited it since I last spoke to them? When were they last here to admire it? Did they *ever* admire it? *You* shall have a house at least, so I hope you treat your abode better than this. What a folly! I work on it so long, and *this* is my re-payment? God, why mock me so? No Moseley, it is not just a piece of word they scrawled; it's a denial of my very existence! To think that such a ghastly piece of scribbles will not only steal the attention, but also get so much attention! It laughs at me day and night; it stays alive, while I rock into oblivion. While my dutiful messages fade with the memories of time, never to return again except the next person's wall, or even their litter box, this piece of language, without any

obscurity remains! It remains, and it rocks everyone's brains!

Admit it Moseley; you looked at it and you immediately understood! *Maudit Bastard*. Is there anything obscure about it? What a great piece of word. You related to it instantly. Who knows how, but you related to it. My work? If I should get a snicker I'd call myself lucky! And a call back from the client? If the client still uses it! Who knows! They dropped me like a sack the minute the project was done.

I had other advice for them you know! But they had had enough; they just wanted to sell the place off. How can you sell part of your soul away? Sure - they barely worked on it for a year; but I worked on it for at least 10! And does the lay man understand it? Does he give it a second glance? A third? Only if there is a pretty lady in front of it. What of the pretty lady that is the building? It doesn't need to be Ionic! But this is so ironic. How does culture decide to worship isolated spoils, and the rest thrown to waste?!

I'll tell you why - they're used to it. They've had so much of the good stuff - they can't handle it anymore. They're bored - bored senseless! The worst irony is when you've had so much you can't tell anymore what you're having. I used to drink wine for dinner, for lunch - even my morning meals had it! 'Til one day, I got sick of it. Or - I lost the taste of it. I don't even know anymore. It just wasn't strong enough to feed my thirst, not even

the best of it. What is the best of it? I'm too uninspired to care. As unfortunately as I'd have you know - it's the same with these bits of work. A genius, take me for example, don't be intimidated; a genius comes along, sets up a nice piece of digestible work, nothing too much for you to handle, no questions asked, rules and harmony, proportion, perfection at your table... a sort of... well you know! A sort of *je ne sais quoi*.

That's untenable stuff! Of course they'd be sick of it! Sick of being so close to greatness as to feel it, yet too far to understand and claim it their own; it's too much for the weak soul, so you settle. You settle, and before you know it, wine gets replaced for gin. Never you mind - you started on the right foot! I presume we won't be having problems with you. I'll be there, like a Guardian Angel to lead you along this heroic saga, and when you wobble, lose your faith, or your marbles, I'll be the cane to hold you up! Me? Oh don't worry about me. I've been through these parts too many times, I'm a seasoned veteran! The gin ran dry long ago! I'm barely affected! This morning in fact - ah never mind. I didn't over do it! I'm never over-done! I never settle! I'm a hero, even without the crowd to ascertain it. How can they when they don't know what I do?

What - you think opening up about my creative process will help? I can't tell you my process. It's a secret. It's a mystery. You just gotta trust it - trust it like everything else I told you of,

100% reliable, 100% true. If there were an all-seeing eye, it wouldn't be able to see my process, but that doesn't make it any less real. I'm sorry but I cannot show you it; it just happens. I carry my notebook everywhere, I'm like a sponge. A genius sponge. Everything I see, becomes seen and then becomes beautiful. Look, maybe you'd like to see some of my sketches. Flip past the blobby bits; that was me testing out the pens and colours.

You don't look impressed; a wizard must always keep their tools clean! What - 0.35mm ink? Never would I inch close to that! I only use 0.25mm, I capture the finest grain, and with the finest pens. Look, this is pure gold. It may look like sketches and squiggles, but it's thought, pure and simple! Thinking through drawing - a wholly underestimated approach. I'm surprised people still bulk it into "just another" creative affair. Who could solve any problem without seeing it first?

Look - on this page I went through 10 iterations of the same detail, but each had a different contribution to the project. Not one of them was better than the other - they were all equally worked out! But only one was decided upon, because it just clicked, there was a boom, and a bam! I can explain you all about the materiality of the thing; but I can't tell you how it becomes beautiful. You'll just have to trust me on that. I know we said it's not all about aesthetics and it isn't; but isn't it great this doesn't keep it from being beautiful? I mean I want it to be pretty after all.

Who will have anything to say for it if it's any less? And do I have rules for that? Yeah, I've got some rules of thumb. They're my thumb, not yours. But they're for you, you'll see you'll like it, of course you'll like it, I liked it, and I was trained to see beauty.

Not that you can teach beauty, but if you see it enough, you just become it. You get it? No? Well it's ok - it just means you're not acquainted enough! We are almost back at the office; once there, remind me to show you what a man with taste lives like, where the true connoisseur of Venus' orbit never fails to land! Who knows maybe you have it too, maybe you just don't know! I mean, you did scout me out, I'm sure there's more to be said about you, your tastes, your morales as a patron of this fine City, and your actual hold of culture. More so than those vengeful vultures who financed that lifeless building, or that unkempt stuccoed one, or that chain-bank!

Gosh darn you city planners! If it weren't for you meddling kids...! Soon enough we will be on the list of top ugliest cities if they continue this way! And they will- because all they care for is money! Well guess what - development doesn't just mean money. Waste can mean the same thing! But beauty? Ah that rarefied wonder seldom comes unless its earnestly sought! The stupid and lazy would rather equate that with scarcity than abundance! But beauty is abundant! Except it's not

always apparent! It's a difference you know! --
These people don't know beauty!

Even if I can but know it as a glimpse, even if it's just a feeling you get after working with it so many years, I think it's just fine of me to say they don't get it, and I do! I don't care how many people disagree with me. And I don't care that there are no official universal rules to prove it. Maybe there should be. If there were, I'm sure you'll have to agree with me, but for now, do so anyway because I know.

Why? Well I can see it of course, *see*? No? Based off which rules you ask? That of experience. Don't strain your mind there poor old chap; you'll just as well not be able to see any better when I tell you the rules, because there aren't any. What am I to do, pull them out of thin air before I even make something? Oh - you think things exist before you have made them? Invisible things? Things that govern how things should be? A morale order? Why! If there were a morale order I'd have gotten those dimwits to pay me for the past work! I'd have gotten that damn contractor to build my drawings exactly as I asked! I'd have gotten an autograph from the Queen herself! And I'd have gotten three weeks vacation paid, and with a personal note of congratulation from Mies. Never heard of him either? He's the one all those lifeless office buildings copied. Less is more? More bore arose! Morality shmorality. Principles? What principles?

Are we a science now? The science of beauty? Hah!
Impossible, I say!

Don't fret, Moseley - I'm not saying you won't get beauty; I'm saying we just don't yet know at this point what shape your beauty will take. It's a lifestyle, but it's also an instant. You get it? No? Of course; it's a paradox. It's not meant to be gotten! Heck; I don't even know what I just said. You see? I just did it again. I think I just gave you the first lesson in the possible, most improbable; creation. I mean - I'm not a creationist! Don't get me wrong, come back, please, please. It's not like I'm converting you to my views or anything! I'm opening your mind! It's not scary and chaotic here!

Take a seat! Have some more wine! Stay just a bit longer! I'm almost done - for today. There's plenty of more where this came from; in fact we'll need to have more meetings! Design meetings, history meetings; surely you'll appreciate my drawings if you could but see the world I come from.

Hold on a sec, let me just find it, what you're after. I should have thought you'd be after a model, a drawing, a signed paper napkin sketch with your ideas. But I think I finally understand you lot and how you think. Let me see here; un momento; the formalities! The contract copies for you, there you are, you cannot live without those things. Well look through them again if you still doubt my visions are worth your while! I have cleared away all the sketch and rough work, the real

important stuff that was piled atop it... I mean we're not usually this messy. Ok this office is always a mess. Foam, models, tracing paper! Everything everywhere! Just take it as a sign of us always being abuzz!

Creativity and creative ideas, always churning. How can a work so precious and catered to your exact whims not begin messy? Monsieur! - do not take that as an offense, please! What I mean to say is that you're complex, not simple! If it's not here or there, it comes from thin air, and it takes time and effort to bring together, with tribulations, trials of experiment to make work! I should have hoped you to delight in the attention we have given you, but I see this is definitely not your language still.

I'll say then; have I been making any sense to you at all this whole time? Why - three whole hours together and you barely raised your voice. Didn't even hear a mutter on your part. Is this how all our meetings will be? Why - golly no! Not unless you refuse to talk, but I must say, I've never felt so rude in my life, standing here as if I'm all alone, as if I were talking to a brick wall! I do in fact talk to those - in my world all brick walls speak; and they will have spoken me a tonne more than you stoic Sir, I am sorry to say! Some proud, some obtuse; ...but no matter! I seem intensely capable of going on in my own world again, forgetting you Sir, don't share such enthusiasm.

Please - let any and all your concerns be voiced; I am here to serve! I was certain I had you covered, I thought we were getting along, why, I almost thought I could call you a friend, though I don't know: is that legal? Are clients friends? Are there supposed to be any confidentiality issues here? You will trust me with your life I expect, of course we can be friends! Why - by the time we get your house built, we can be the best of friends! You don't happen, to object do you?

Here is what you'll have; my word of honour. Our guarantee is this seal. See this stamp? Not only will it mean I will make it beautiful, but safe to boot! To the law! And besides, to any architect calling themselves an architect it has got to be beautiful or else we can take it away! Not through any legal action; through lack of employment opportunities! Through ignorance, shunning, and ostracizing! The architecture community is small you know! News of bad work travels fast.

I know all the architects from Yukon to Toronto to Newfoundland by name; even those North and South of there! We even speak at the same galas, the same art openings; we're all tied together on Facebook though I rarely log onto that. Sometimes my assistant posts things on my behalf, but I barely understand the goolge; I don't want to waste time on the new stuff. Why, if people want good taste, *they* should make the effort to find *me*! I'm not going to prostrate myself, selling myself

everywhere just so I can get someone to appreciate my genius. No! They must be called! If they're worth their salt they'll come knocking!

Do I look like a beggar? I'm not a financial servant! A lost soul! I'm an architect! Let the marketers have enough of that social media crap for the ages, I'll sit here plotting, scheming, designing away, and I'm sure that one day I'll not have to have people post anything, I will just be known for all that I'm worth. Why post after all? Have people nothing better to do with their time? Why - how many hours of reading can one cover in the time that it takes to post about their life? Much less read it ever again? One could read all of literature for the equivalent!

And don't you know it - I am a savant in that field too! I don't *just* indulge in architecture. No - my love of the arts extends well beyond my practice, making of my practice an art form. I hope you too shall embark on enjoying such rich luxuries of taste as I. There is no judgment here! When have I ever judged? On the contrary, as I hope I have made it abundantly clear, I shall only teach!

Come hither; have a look at this painting! Maravilloso! The latest work of José Cavaço de Bourg; he is the great great grandson of Julio, who invented "Prime Reductionism". Do you know what that is? No? I *need* to take you to an art gallery some time soon. It's the newest fad, and I'm quite in love with it. It's so in mode, and it has some quality that makes me think it'll be in for all time. I

can even call it, - classic. *Haha*. It suits me well you see, I am a man for all times and hobbies. If my name wasn't Latrope, why you could call me, the most interesting man in the world. Or quite simply, architect, Sir. And what of this sculpture? A true original! I salvaged it from an ancient archaeological dig I helped with years ago. The lead archaeologist needed help to decipher what the architecture was all about. At the same time, they had all these problems with their house. Of course, I knew I could be of help to both scenes, and I jumped to it. What else do you do when you're an architect, but apply yourself 24/7? It's just what happens when you simply know how. Or when you think you know how; it turns out roughly the same in the end! See, my work was so upheld, I didn't even have to ask for this - it was a gift for my efforts.

That's what happens when you're valued and appreciated. Isn't it wonderful though? From the high-modern period, but ancient! That's just how I like my own taste. And I have the latest in film, fashion, design; all here. I'm like an encyclopedia backed by extensive learning in print and stone. See? No need for the internet here; it's partly why I hate it so much! Hardly a thing to trust! I'm exceptionally curious, and daft enough to keep it all in line on my own! Have you been to the Greek Isles? Wonderful place! Dramatic sunset. I even brought back a shell; look at this! Beautiful! My latest house will be inspired by this vacation; a fabulous get-a-way.



Figure 7. Mock-up of cornice on scaffolding, construction of the McKim Building

Aha! There you are;
Welcome to Mr. Latrope's library!

I am glad you decided to stick around, he said you'd be here soon enough. I have some references he casually mentioned. I think this will be all you need; maybe a bit of common sense, but that's usually overlooked anyway.

I invite you to take a tour of the [OAA website](#). Perhaps you've never been. I don't think you'll find much use of it. How about the [RAIC](#)? I'm sure there isn't much there for your interest either. Maybe you like to read about buying a condo? He keeps this link in his browser active; not for inspiration, just to try and follow (or curse?) the developers. <https://torontolife.com/real-estate/condos/best-toronto-just-built-condos/> OR - perhaps his approach at the city warranted a less bias perspective? Maybe you'd like to see the growth of condominium construction here; <https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/toronto/toronto-condo-growth-by-decade/article34827531/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com&>.

Does anyone trust news sources anymore? I suppose it depends on how you treat them. Maybe, if you just happen to want to critique the work, try [“Writing About Architecture”](#) by Alexandra Lange. It may take you a while to become a full-fledged critic, but who knows? It could very well open your eyes to Latrobe’s world, if you so care to see. Try to listen to your instincts and maybe you’ll just get it like the best of them. Ah - so you are more so interested in the profession? How about a little bit of its history with [“From Craft to Profession”](#) by Mary N. Woods. That Benjamin Henry Latrobe? Not the slightest likeness I’ll warrant. Oh you want the pattern books; well, don’t tell Mr. Latrobe I gave you some of these, he’ll be heavily disappointed and storm into another rant, but you’ll find a nice sample here: [“The Architecture of Country Houses”](#) by Andrew Jackson Downing. I too, much preferred that to the hassle of Latrobe’s lengthy design approach and got me a house from its very pages which serve my every need. But don’t mention it to him as he doesn’t know. It’s in the suburbs

and he tries to avoid those parts if he can, so I think he'll be ignorant of it as of yet. He's always in his own world. It is expanding slowly; how so? Maybe you'd like ["Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America"](#) edited by Joan Ockman. Of course this is nothing like ["Architecture: Crisis of Modern Science"](#) by Alberto-Pérez Gómez to aim at the beginnings of decline... Oh - if you're into copies and what to do about it, I'd fancy giving ["Architecture: From Alphabet to Algorithm"](#) by Mario Carpo a look. Latrobe thinks his great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great aunt was the sister of Alberti's first print maker; we tried to make inquiries to the connection, but weren't sure as our Italian isn't proficient enough to translate the telegraph we received from our search there. I actually quite liked the book for its theory instead. You've not read much theory? Ahh - well I think ["Kant: Critique of Pure Reason"](#) can be laid off for a while, but might I suggest ["A Primer on Theory in Architecture"](#) by Karen Cordes Spence? It should position

you in the art of theorizing theory
so you can theorize all you want!
And it's not even limited to
architecture! Maybe that will get
the masses on our side; who knows? I
certainly don't. I'll be too busy
and happy to watch Downton Abbey -
or Highclere's Alter-Ego. How
delightful it is, a massive "Thank
you!" for being interesting, AND
understandable, whilst showing how
sometimes the best spokespeople are
those inhabiting the works
themselves; and also inspiring my
study of British accents. Not a
direct inspiration of the tone of
this volume to be sure... Are you
interested in how those ancient
beauties came about? Perhaps
["Éléments et théories de
l'architecture"](#) by Julien Gaudet
would do you a good browse; you
might even be inspired so as to
think you can produce designs by the
time you reach its' Volume II,
though neither the author, nor
Latrobe would dare listen to such
claims. Have you read ["Architecture.
\(1910\)"](#) by Adolf Loos? It's a short
essay, and he's of the opinion you
already have what it takes. I'm
rather of the opinion Latrobe will

be offended, but then again, he believes in his high culture. He has not gotten around to reading it even though it's easily accessible off Google. I'd be surprised if he gets to it, let alone likes it. Maybe if he reads C.P. Snow's ["Two Cultures"](#) he will be so inclined, inspired even, as to bridge the so-called gap of theory that the intellectual divide implicitly creates, but then maybe his pride is too great for that at the moment. To that end, he was recommended the book ["We Have Never Been Modern"](#) by Bruno Latour. Perhaps he will start to see all things inter-dependent, whether he accepts it in his narrative or not, though for now it's not quite the case. He prefers... a grandiosity, and a certain critical acclaim, as to assert his practice well beyond the intellectual capabilities of the masses. Certainly he associates with ["Andrei Rublev"](#) by Andrei Tarkovsky in the passion that goes into all his works; not sure everyone else agrees, but they aren't in our office, so it'd be unfair of them to judge. Are you inspired by the office? We can't really let you sit in every day, but if you read ["Made](#)

[by the Office for Metropolitan Architecture: An Ethnography of Design](#) by Albena Yaneva you'll probably get a good enough idea as to how things are done here... we don't copy Rem Koolhaas though, so it won't really be a likeness at all... actually we don't copy anything. Actually I'm surprised anything really gets built here, how can we get anywhere by claiming to be completely unique? You know what... I don't think I'm supposed to be divulging all this information, I don't want him to have another fuss with his clients, so perhaps it is time for you to go, I hope these resources have been of interest... if you call back another day, you might catch Latrope for an actual discussion - he loves a good discussion, almost as much as a good rant!

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Charlette Caldwell, Research Assistant
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